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PART I

THE CIRCUMSTANCES
LEADING TO THE RESIGNATION OF THE
FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR,
Mr. J. D. PROFUMO

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CHAPTER I THE PRINCIPAL PERSONS

(i) Stephen Ward

10. The story must start with Stephen Ward, aged 50. The son of a clergyman, by profession he was an osteopath with consulting rooms at 38, Devonshire Street, W. 1. His skill was very considerable and he included among his patients many well-known people. He was also an accomplished portrait artist. His sitters included people of much eminence. He had a quick and easy manner of conversation which attracted some but repelled others. It pleased him much to meet people in high places, and he was prone to exaggerate the nature of his acquaintanceships with them. He would speak of many of them as if they were great friends when, more often than not, he had only treated them as patients or drawn their portraits.

11. Yet he was at the same time utterly immoral. He had a small house or flat in London at 17, Wimpole Mews, W. 1., and a country cottage on the Cliveden Estate next to the River Thames. He used to pick up pretty girls of the age of 16 or 17, often from night clubs, and induce them to come and stay with him at his house in London. He used to take these girls down at week-ends to his cottage. He seduced many of these himself. He also procured them to be mistresses for his influential friends. He did not confine his attention to promiscuity. He catered also for those of his friends who had perverted tastes. There is evidence that he was ready to arrange for whipping and other sadistic performances. He kept collections of pornographic photographs. He attended parties where there were sexual orgies of a revolting nature. In money matters he was improvident. He did not keep a banking account. He got a firm of solicitors to keep a sort of banking account for him, paying in cheques occasionally to them and getting them to pay his rent. More often he cashed his incoming cheques through other people; or paid his bills with the incoming cheques. He had many cash transactions which left no trace.

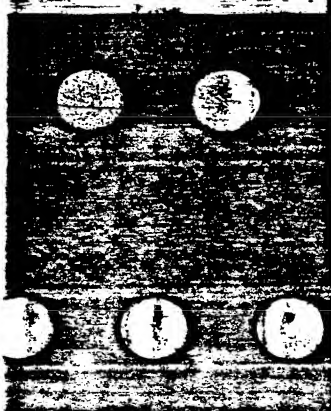
12. Finally, he admired the Soviet régime and sympathised with the Communists. He used to advocate their cause in conversation with his patients, so much so that several became suspicious of him. With others he was more discreet. He became very friendly with a Russian, Captain Eugene Ivanov. To him I now turn.

(ii) Eugene Ivanov

13. Captain Eugene Ivanov⁽¹⁾ was an assistant Russian Naval Attaché at the Russian Embassy in London. As such his role would be diplomatic only. He came to this country on 27th March, 1960. But the Security Service discovered that he was also a Russian Intelligence Officer. He had qualities not normally found in a Russian officer in this country. His English was reasonably good and he was able to converse easily. He drank, however, a good deal and was something of a ladies' man. He was keen to meet people in this country. He was very impressed by persons of title, particularly

⁽¹⁾ He was Captain 2nd Rank in the USSR Navy equivalent to Commander in the Royal Navy.

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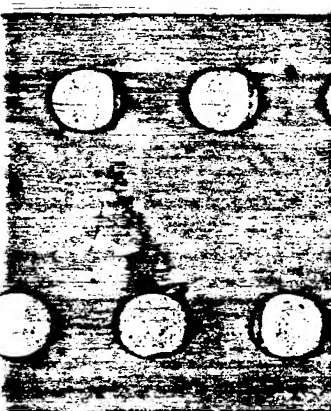


peers of the realm. He lost no opportunity of advocating the Russian viewpoint. He was, according to Stephen Ward, "an absolutely dedicated Communist and also a nice person". And he was quite open about his position. Right from the start he would tell his hearers, "Anything you say goes back to Moscow. Look out what you say."

14. Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov became great friends. Captain Ivanov was often down at the cottage at Cliveden at week-ends. He visited Stephen Ward's house in London. They met in restaurants. They often played bridge together. Stephen Ward introduced him to many of his friends, both those of high rank and also the girls. And Stephen Ward lost no opportunity of helping him, as the events show.

15. It has been suggested to me that Ivanov filled a new role in Russian technique. It was to divide the United Kingdom from the United States by these devious means. If Ministers or prominent people can be placed in compromising situations, or made the subject of damaging rumour, or the Security Service can be made to appear incompetent, it may weaken the confidence of the United States in our integrity and reliability. So a man like Captain Ivanov may take every opportunity of getting to know Ministers or prominent people—not so much to obtain information from them (though this would be a useful by-product)—but so as to work towards destroying confidence. If this were the object of Captain Ivanov with Stephen Ward as his tool he succeeded only too well.

(iii) Christine Keeler



16. Christine Keeler is a girl, now aged 21, whose home is at Wraysbury. She left home at the age of 16 and went to London. She was soon employed at the Murray Cabaret Club as a show-girl, which involved, as she put it, just walking around with no clothes on. She had only been at the Cabaret Club a short time when Stephen Ward came there and they danced together. Thereafter he often telephoned her and took her out. After a very few days he asked her to go and live with him. She went. She ran away from him many times but she always went back. He seemed to control her. She lived with him at 17, Wimpole Mews, from about June, 1961, to March, 1962. He took her to his country cottage at Cliveden and he introduced her to many men, sometimes men of rank and position, with whom she had sexual intercourse. (A jury has since found him guilty on a charge of living on the earnings of her prostitution.) She had undoubted physical attractions. Later on he introduced her also to the drug Indian hemp and she became addicted to it. She met coloured men who trafficked in it and she went to live with them.

(iv) Mr. Profumo

17. Mr. Profumo was Secretary of State for War from July, 1960, to June, 1963. He is now aged 48. He had a fine war record and rose to the rank of brigadier. He entered Parliament in 1940 but lost his seat in 1945. In 1950 he came back as the Member for the Stratford-on-Avon Division of Warwickshire. He has a distinguished record of service to the country. He was Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation (1952), Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies

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(1957) and Under-Secretary and later Minister of State, Foreign Office (1958): and in 1960 he became Secretary of State for War. No one can doubt that a man with such a record was entitled to the confidence of his colleagues and of the country; and it should not be assumed by anyone that he would give away secret information. Whatever indiscretions he may have committed, and whatever falsehoods he may have told, no one who has given evidence before me has doubted his loyalty. In particular there was no reason for the Security Service to suspect it.

18. Mr. Profumo married in 1954 Miss Valerie Hobson, a talented actress, and her support of him over their difficult days is one of the most redeeming features of the events I have to describe.

(v) Lord Astor

19. Lord Astor succeeded his father in 1952 and inherited the estate at Cliveden. He had previously taken an active part in politics but since that time he has devoted himself to his private affairs and to charities in which he is interested. He has done valuable work for hospitals, particularly the Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital at Cliveden. He has done a great deal for refugees, and has been all over the world on their behalf. He has provided a large sum as a Foundation for scientific and other studies. He has played an important part in many educational and social charities. He has also important business interests. He inherited a famous stud of racehorses, which he manages himself, and also a farm of 250 acres.

20. Cliveden is one of the great houses of the country. It is owned by the National Trust but the present Lord Astor is the tenant. He has upheld its tradition of hospitality. He has guests staying most week-ends and often friends for meals. They include the names of some of the most distinguished and respected people in the land.

21. Lord Astor got to know Stephen Ward in 1950 when he went to him as a patient after a fall at hunting. Stephen Ward treated him well and cured him. Ever since that time Lord Astor has sent him many of his friends as patients.

22. In 1956 Lord Astor let Stephen Ward a cottage on the Cliveden Estate. The cottage was down by the river, while the big house is on top of the hill. To get from the cottage to the house it is a quarter to half a mile's steep walk, or one mile by road. Stephen Ward used to come up at week-ends and give osteopathic treatment to Lord Astor and to those of his guests who desired it. The account, including payment for the guests, was charged to Lord Astor. Stephen Ward often had visitors at this cottage. Usually they came for the day, and remained down at the cottage. When Stephen Ward went to the big house to give treatment he went by himself. On occasions, Lord Astor invited him to come up to Cliveden for lunch or for drinks.

23. Lord Astor had no sympathy with Stephen Ward's political views and made it clear to him. But at the pressing request of Stephen Ward, he did on occasions help him in approaching the Foreign Office (as will appear later), but not in any way sponsoring his views.

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24. Lord Astor has helped Stephen Ward with money from time to time. In 1952, when Stephen Ward was starting, not yet established in practice, Lord Astor lent him £1,250, which Stephen Ward repaid over the succeeding years by professional services. And Lord Astor has on occasions advanced sums to him since, on the understanding that it was an advance to be repaid by expenses of treatment. In May, 1963, Stephen Ward opened a banking account and Lord Astor guaranteed an overdraft up to £1,500. This was because Stephen Ward anticipated legal expenses and also desired to acquire premises for an office and residence. All the receipts from his practice and elsewhere were to go towards repayment.

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CHAPTER II

THE CLIVEDEN WEEK-END AND ITS SEQUEL

25. Stephen Ward often expressed a wish to go to Moscow. He wanted to draw pictures of the personalities there, particularly Mr. Khrushchev. He told this to the Editor of a newspaper who was a patient of his. The Editor happened to have met Captain Ivanov: and invited Stephen Ward to lunch and meet him. This was on 20th January, 1961. Stephen Ward took an immediate liking to Captain Ivanov. He began to enlist Ivanov's help to arrange sittings with Mr. Khrushchev. The Security Service got to know of their friendship and on 8th June, 1961, saw Stephen Ward about it. A few weeks later came the Cliveden week-end.

(i) The Swimming Pool

26. The week-end of Saturday, 8th July, 1961, to Sunday, 9th July, 1961, is of critical importance. Lord and Lady Astor had a large party of distinguished visitors to their great house at Cliveden. They included Mr. Profumo, the Secretary of State for War, and his wife, Mrs. Profumo, who stayed the week-end. Other visitors came to meals but did not stay the night. Stephen Ward entertained some young girls at his cottage. One of these was Christine Keeler, who was then living with him. Captain Ivanov came down on the Sunday. There is a fine swimming pool in the grounds at Cliveden near the main house, and Lord Astor, on occasions, allowed Stephen Ward to use it with his friends so long as it did not clash with his own use of it.

27. On the Saturday, after nightfall, Stephen Ward and some of the girls were bathing in the swimming pool when one of them, Christine Keeler, whilst she was in the water, took off her bathing costume, threw it on the bank, and bathed naked. Soon afterwards Lord Astor and a party of his visitors walked down after dinner to the swimming pool to watch the bathing. Lord Astor and Mr. Profumo walked ahead of Lady Astor, Mrs. Profumo and the others. Christine Keeler rushed to get her swimming costume. Stephen Ward threw it on one side so that she could not get it at once and Christine seized a towel to hide herself. Lord Astor and Mr. Profumo arrived at this moment, and it was all treated as a piece of fun—it was over in a few minutes, for the ladies saw nothing indecent at all. Stephen Ward and the girls afterwards got dressed and went up to the house and joined the party for a little while.

28. On the Sunday, after lunch, Stephen Ward and the girls and Captain Ivanov went to the swimming pool. Later Lord Astor and others of his party came down to swim too. There was a light-hearted, ~~frivolous~~ bathing party, where everyone was in bathing costumes and nothing indecent took place at all. Photographs were taken by Mr. Profumo and others. They showed, of course, that Mr. Profumo was there with some of the girls but nothing improper whatever.

29. Captain Ivanov left Cliveden in the early evening and took Christine Keeler back with him to town. They went to Stephen Ward's house and there

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drank a good deal and there were perhaps some kind of sexual relations. Captain Ivanov left the house before Stephen Ward himself got back at midnight. But Captain Ivanov never became the lover of Christine.

(ii) Mr. Profumo's Association with Christine Keeler

30. It is apparent that during this week-end Mr. Profumo was much attracted by Christine Keeler and determined to see her again, if he could. This was, of course, easy, through Stephen Ward. In the next few days and weeks Mr. Profumo made assignments with Christine Keeler. He visited her at Stephen Ward's house and had sexual intercourse with her there. Sometimes he called at a time when Stephen Ward or someone else was there. He would then take her for a drive until the coast was clear. On one occasion he did not use his own car because his wife had it in the country. He used a car belonging to a Minister which had a mascot on it. He drove her to see Whitehall and Downing Street, also Regent's Park. Mr. Profumo wrote two or three notes to Christine Keeler and gave her one or two presents such as perfume and a cigarette lighter. She said her parents were badly off and he gave her £20 for them, realising that this was a polite way on her part of asking for money for her services. In August, 1961, whilst his wife was in the Isle of Wight, he took Christine Keeler to his own house in Regent's Park. Altogether I am satisfied that his object in visiting her was simply because he was attracted by her and desired sexual intercourse with her. It has been suggested that Captain Ivanov was her lover also. I do not think he was. The night of Sunday, 9th July, 1961, was an isolated occasion. I think that Captain Ivanov went to Stephen Ward's house for social entertainment and conversation, and not for sexual intercourse. I do not believe that Captain Ivanov and Mr. Profumo ever met in Stephen Ward's house or in the doorway. They did no doubt narrowly miss one another on occasions; and this afforded Stephen Ward and Christine Keeler much amusement. (Later on a great deal has been made of this episode. It has been suggested that Captain Ivanov and Mr. Profumo were sharing her services. I do not accept this suggestion.)

(iii) The Request for Information

31. About this time, probably during the Cliveden week-end, Captain Ivanov told Stephen Ward that the Russians knew as a fact that the American Government had taken a decision to arm Western Germany with atomic weapons, and he asked Ward to find out through his influential friends when this decision was to be implemented. Without saying so in so many words, Captain Ivanov with some subtlety implied that if Stephen Ward supplied the answer his trip to Moscow would be facilitated.

32. One of the most critical points in my inquiry is this: Did Stephen Ward ask Christine Keeler to obtain from Mr. Profumo information as to the time when the Americans were going to supply the atomic bomb to Germany? If he did ask her, it was probably at this time in July, 1961: for it was the very thing that Captain Ivanov had asked Stephen Ward to find out from his influential friends. I am very dubious about her recollection about this. She has given several different versions of it and put it at different

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dates. (She once said it was at the time of the Cuban crisis in October, 1962.) The truth about it is, I think, this: There was a good deal of talk in her presence, between Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov, about getting this information. And Stephen Ward may well have turned to her and said, "You ought to ask Jack (Profumo) about it". But I do not think it was said as seriously as it has since been reported. Stephen Ward said to me (and here I believed him),

"Quite honestly, nobody in their right senses would have asked somebody like Christine Keeler to obtain any information of that sort from Mr. Profumo—he would have jumped out of his skin."

If said at all by Stephen Ward, it was, I believe, not said seriously expecting her to act on it. I am quite satisfied that she never acted on it. She told me, and I believed her, that she never asked Mr. Profumo for the information. Mr. Profumo was also clear that she never asked him, and I am quite sure that he would not have told her if she had asked him. (Later on a great deal has been made of this episode. I think the importance of it has been greatly exaggerated.)

(iv) Sir Norman Brook's Warning

33. On the 31st July, 1961, the Head of the Security Service suggested to Sir Norman Brook (the then Secretary of the Cabinet, now Lord Normanbrook) that it might be useful for him to have a word with Mr. Profumo about Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov. (I will deal with the reasons for this later when I deal with the operation of the Security Service.) In accordance with this request on 9th August, 1961, Sir Norman Brook suggested to Mr. Profumo that he should be careful in his dealings with Stephen Ward. He said there were indications that Stephen Ward might be interested in picking up scraps of information and passing them on to Captain Ivanov. Mr. Profumo was grateful for the warning. He told Sir Norman that he met Captain Ivanov at the Cliveden week-end and then, after the encounter at Cliveden, he saw Captain Ivanov at a reception at the Soviet Embassy. On that occasion Captain Ivanov seemed to make a special point of being civil to him. These were the only two occasions on which Mr. Profumo had come across Captain Ivanov. On the other hand he was better acquainted with Stephen Ward. Mr. Profumo went on to say that many people knew Stephen Ward and it might be helpful if warnings were given to others too. He mentioned the name of another Cabinet Minister whom Sir Norman afterwards did warn. Sir Norman Brook referred rather delicately to another matter which had been suggested by the Head of the Security Service. Was it possible to do anything to persuade Ivanov to help us? But Mr. Profumo thought he ought to keep well away from it.

34. It has been suggested that Sir Norman Brook went beyond his province at this point; and that he ought to have reported to the Prime Minister, and not taken it upon himself to speak to Mr. Profumo. I think this criticism is based on a misapprehension. Neither the Security Service nor Sir Norman Brook had any doubts of Mr. Profumo. They did not know that he was having an affair with Christine Keeler and had no reason to suspect it. I have seen a note made by Sir Norman Brook at the time of all that he was told by the Head of the Security Service. The main point

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being made by them was that Stephen Ward might be indiscreet and pass on bits of information to Captain Ivanov. It was therefore desirable to warn Mr. Profumo of this possibility. Furthermore there was a thought that Captain Ivanov might be persuaded to defect. These seem to me to be matters which were very suitable for the Secretary of the Cabinet to mention to him, but hardly such as to need the intervention of the Prime Minister.

35. It was on Wednesday, 9th August, 1961, that Sir Norman Brook spoke to Mr. Profumo. It made a considerable impression on him. Mr. Profumo thought that the Security Service must have got knowledge of his affair with Christine Keeler: and that the real object of Sir Norman's call on him (though not expressed) was politely to indicate that his assignations with Christine Keeler should cease. It so happened that Mr. Profumo had already arranged to see her the next night (Thursday, 10th August) but, as soon as Sir Norman left, he took steps to cancel the arrangement.

(v) The 'Darling' Letter

36. On the very same day as Sir Norman Brook spoke to him, Mr. Profumo wrote this letter to Christine Keeler:

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"Darling,

In great haste and because I can get no reply from your phone—

Alas something's blown up tomorrow night and I can't therefore make it. I'm terribly sorry especially as I leave the next day for various trips and then a holiday so won't be able to see you again until some time in September. Blast it. Please take great care of yourself and don't run away.

Love J.

P.S. I'm writing this 'cos I know you're off for the day tomorrow and I want you to know before you go if I still can't reach you by phone."

37. I am satisfied that that letter, if not the end, was the beginning of the end of the association between Mr. Profumo and Christine Keeler. He may have seen her a few times more but that was all. It meant also that he stopped seeing Stephen Ward. Sir Norman Brook's talk had had its effect on him. Mr. Profumo only saw Stephen Ward again about the end of January, 1963, when there was a fear that his association with Christine Keeler would be made public. It has been said in some quarters that Mr. Profumo went on visiting Christine Keeler in 1962 when she was in Dolphin Square. 'Lucky' Gordon gave evidence before me to this effect. So did a man called Hogan. They said they knew it was Mr. Profumo by having seen his photographs in the newspapers. I found myself unable to accept their evidence. Mr. Hogan had given a story to a newspaper that he was 'butler' to Christine Keeler and took up coffee on two occasions to Mr. Profumo and Christine Keeler in bed. He told me that he had signed a contract for £600 for this story to be split between him and two free-lance reporters. But he was not a butler at all. He was a carpet cleaner. I have found it difficult to fix a definite date for the end of the association. When Mr. Profumo was seen by the Chief Whip on 4th February, 1963, he said it had "all taken place between July and December of 1961", and in his statement in the House of Commons on 22nd March, 1963, he said, "I last

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saw Miss Keeler in December, 1961, and I have not seen her since". Christine Keeler herself, in her statement to the Press on 26th March, 1963, adopted this date, evidently following him. I have heard their evidence on this point. Mr. Profumo is sure that he brought it to an end when Sir Norman Brook gave him the warning, and he wrote the letter to her the self same day. The mistake about the date was because he remembered Sir Norman Brook saying, "I thought I should see you before we go away for the recess," and he thought it was the December recess (not having the letter or date before him) but later on, when he got the date, he realised it was in fact the August recess. Whatever be the truth about this, I am quite satisfied the association did not last very long. It certainly ended by December, 1961.

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CHAPTER III

STEPHEN WARD HELPING THE RUSSIANS

38. After August, 1961, Stephen Ward saw little or nothing of Mr. Profumo. But he continued very friendly with Captain Ivanov and it is plain that Captain Ivanov was continually asking Stephen Ward questions about the general political intentions of the British: and that Stephen Ward did his best to get all the information he could for Ivanov. He sought help from his influential friends in this behalf, particularly Lord Astor and Sir Godfrey Nicholson, M.P.

(i) The Berlin Crisis

39. One thing he did was to get Lord Astor to write to the Foreign Office on 2nd September, 1961. In this letter Lord Astor said he had a friend called Stephen Ward, who had become a friend of Captain Ivanov and suggested that if the Foreign Office wished to ensure at any particular moment that the Russian Embassy was absolutely correctly informed as to Western intentions, Stephen Ward would be useful. Stephen Ward could pass on the information himself or could very easily arrange for Captain Ivanov to meet anyone. In consequence of this letter, on 18th September, 1961, the Foreign Office interviewed Stephen Ward. He gave a long account of his political views and said that he was anxious to turn his friendship with Captain Ivanov to useful account. He was told quite plainly that the Foreign Office would not wish to avail themselves of his services.

40. The next thing he did was to get Sir Godfrey Nicholson, M.P., to meet Captain Ivanov. (Sir Godfrey knew Stephen Ward well and had been a patient of his for many years—and had recommended him to many others. Sir Godfrey is, of course, a most loyal Englishman.)

41. Stephen Ward sought to use Sir Godfrey as a means of getting information for Captain Ivanov from the Foreign Office about British intentions over disarmament and over Berlin. Sir Godfrey did see the Foreign Office, and indeed the Foreign Secretary; and he wrote three letters to Captain Ivanov about the Berlin matter and the Oder-Neisse line. But he was careful to submit the draft of these letters to the Foreign Office and get them approved before he sent them. (Lord Home went so far as to warn Sir Godfrey not to see Captain Ivanov, but Sir Godfrey felt that as a Member of Parliament he must be free to talk to him.) Stephen Ward did not rest there. He wanted to meet Sir Harold Caccia, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office: and on 5th April, 1962, Sir Godfrey arranged a luncheon where Stephen Ward met Sir Harold. Stephen Ward offered to put Sir Harold in direct touch with Captain Ivanov but Sir Harold declined the offer. The Foreign Office were under no illusions as to Stephen Ward.

(ii) The Cuban Crisis

42. In late October, 1962, there was the Cuban crisis when the Russian ships were heading towards Cuba with nuclear weapons. Stephen Ward played a very active part at this juncture. He seems to have been acting on the

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suggestion of Captain Ivanov. Stephen Ward's point was that the Soviet Government looked to the United Kingdom as the only hope of mediation in this crisis: and that the United Kingdom should call a summit conference to resolve it. Stephen Ward, on 24th October, 1962, telephoned the Foreign Office and said that Lord Astor had recommended him to contact Sir Harold Caccia: and he put forward the suggestion of a summit conference. On 25th October, 1962, he got Sir Godfrey Nicholson to meet Captain Ivanov and then, at Captain Ivanov's request, to go to the Foreign Office with the same proposal. Stephen Ward afterwards himself telephoned to the Foreign Office about it. On the same day he got Lord Astor to speak to Lord Arran. Lord Astor told Lord Arran that there was a Russian official (no doubt it was Captain Ivanov) who was seeking to pass information of an urgent nature to the British Government. Two days later, on 27th October, 1962, Stephen Ward took Captain Ivanov to Lord Arran's house. Captain Ivanov told Lord Arran that he wished to convey a message to the British Government by indirect means asking them to call a summit conference in London forthwith. He maintained that Mr. Khrushchev would accept the invitation with alacrity, and thus the United Kingdom would break the deadlock. Lord Arran suspected that this was an attempt to drive a wedge between the United Kingdom and the Americans. He reported it both to the Foreign Office and to Admiralty House.

43. All these efforts by Stephen Ward failed. It so happened that on Sunday, 28th October, 1962, there was another party at Cliveden. Lord Astor's guests included Lord Arran, Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov came up to the house. While they were there news came through over the broadcast that the Russian ships had turned back from Cuba. Captain Ivanov could not, indeed, did not, conceal his anger and discomfiture. All the guests noticed it.

44. Looking back on the incident, Stephen Ward told me that he felt at the time that he was doing something momentous, but afterwards he realised that it was of little real significance. I accept that Stephen Ward's activities, although misconceived and misdirected, were not deliberately mischievous, and I am glad to say that over this critical period the efforts of Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov did not have the slightest effect on any of the people whom they approached—except to make everyone more suspicious of them than ever.

(iii) Name Dropping

45. Shortly after the Cuban crisis, on 31st October, 1962, there was an incident which will illustrate the way in which Stephen Ward was apt to drop names of well-known people which led to unfounded rumours about them. In the evening of 31st October, 1962, Mr. William S. Shepherd, M.P., went to Stephen Ward's house. He found, as he says, Captain Ivanov there, Christine Keeler, and also Marilyn Rice-Davies. (She was another of the girls whom Stephen Ward found and she was currently living in his house.) They did not know that Mr. Shepherd was a Member of Parliament. The conversation turned to the Cuban crisis. Mr. Shepherd said it was a victory for the Americans. Captain Ivanov became very angry. When Mr. Shepherd got up to go Stephen Ward said, referring to Captain Ivanov and himself, "we must go too. We are going to have dinner with Iain Macleod,"—which Mr. Shepherd thought was an extraordinary thing. This was a typical distortion of the truth by Stephen Ward. They were not going to have dinner with Mr. Macleod at all.

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46. The fact was that on 31st October, 1962, there was a party at Mr. and Mrs. Macleod's flat at 36, Sloane Court West. Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov simply "gate-crashed". There is no other word for it. It was a party for young people all aged about 18 or 19. On the morning of the party one of the young invited guests (who evidently knew Stephen Ward) telephoned and asked if he could bring along Stephen Ward and a friend of his. He had evidently been put up to this by Stephen Ward. The Macleods did not know anything about Stephen Ward but assumed it was all right and said "Yes". Stephen Ward came rather late to the party and brought with him Captain Ivanov. They did not stay long. They did not meet Mr. Iain Macleod at all. He was in the House of Commons and did not attend the party. Mrs. Macleod came in towards the end of the party and saw these two men who were much older than anyone else. She spoke a word or two to Stephen Ward (whom she did not know) but did not speak to Captain Ivanov. The two only stayed a few minutes and then left. None of the Macleod family have seen or heard of either of them again. Mrs. Macleod told Mr. Macleod next day about it.

47. Mr. Shepherd was so suspicious that, a day or two later, he took the opportunity of mentioning the matter to Mr. Macleod. He said that Stephen Ward had been giving the impression that he had been invited to Mr. Macleod's flat and knew him. Mr. Macleod explained to Mr. Shepherd just what had happened and spoke to the Foreign Secretary (Lord Home) about it and wrote a letter putting it on record. The Foreign Secretary of course knew a good deal about Stephen Ward by this time.

48. It is quite obvious now that Stephen Ward was seeking an opportunity for Captain Ivanov to meet Mr. Macleod and others, to glean, I suppose, any information he could, for the Russians. It is equally obvious that he got nothing.

(iv) A Letter to Mr. Wilson, M.P.

49. On the 7th November, 1962, Ward followed up his activities during the Cuban crisis by reporting them to Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., the Leader of the Opposition. He wrote saying that on Friday, 26th October, an offer was made by the Russians to the Foreign Office for a summit conference. "I can vouch for the authenticity of this", he said, "since I was the intermediary". Mr. Wilson did not think this letter at the time to be of any account and sent a non-committal reply.

50. On 26th December, 1962, Lord and Lady Ednam held a dinner party to which a high official of the Foreign Office and his wife were invited. Stephen Ward and Captain Ivanov were present, too, at the dinner party. They brought up the Nassau Conference and the possibility of Germany acquiring nuclear weapons. But the Foreign Office official gave nothing away.

51. Thus ends the known activities of Ward on behalf of the Russians. He was without doubt a Communist sympathiser, and so much under the influence of Ivanov that he was a potential danger. But this was known to the Security Service and they had passed it on to the people who mattered, particularly the Foreign Office, and any Ministers who might come into contact with him. I see no failure of the Security Service over this period. I will set out the details of their work later.

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CHAPTER IV

THE SLASHING AND SHOOTING

52. Whilst Stephen Ward was thus engaging himself busily during 1962 in aid of Ivanov and the Russians he had continued his vicious sexual activities. He wanted a coloured girl and got Christine Keeler to get him one. In October, 1961, he took her to the Rio Café in the Westbourne Park Road. There were coloured people there. Some were smokers of "reefers", that is, drugged cigarettes, and were engaged in trafficking in Indian hemp. She here met 'Lucky' Gordon for the first time. She asked him, "Can I have some weed?" and he let her have 10 shilling's worth. He wanted to see her again. She said, "I can only see you if you bring your sister for my brother", (meaning a coloured girl for Stephen Ward). She gave him her telephone number. And thus she started her association with coloured men. Some time later she left Stephen Ward and went to live with this man 'Lucky' Gordon. Later she took up a similar association with another one called John Edgecombe. Each of these seems to have considered her to be his property. This led to extreme jealousy which resulted in violence.

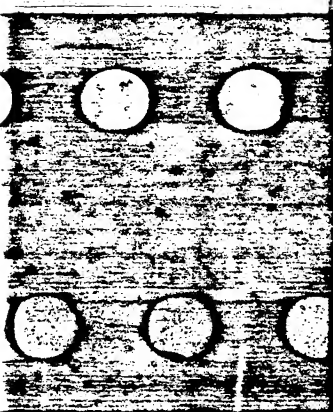
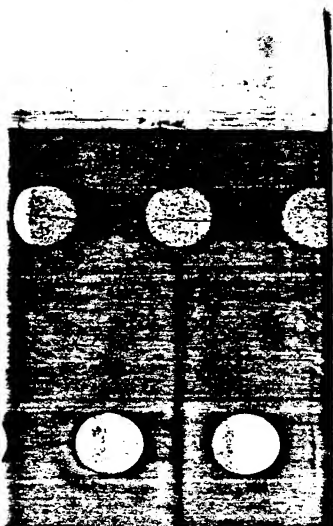
(i) The Slashing

53. On 27th-28th October, 1962, Christine Keeler was with Edgecombe at an "All Nighters Club" in Wardour Street, W. 1., in the early hours of the morning. 'Lucky' Gordon arrived and there was an argument between the two men about her. It flared up into an affray in which 'Lucky' Gordon's face was slashed, necessitating 17 stitches. The police sought to arrest John Edgecombe and charge him with an assault, but he disappeared. He went to Brentford, and Christine Keeler went to live with him there. Meanwhile Stephen Ward had found another girl to live with him in place of Christine Keeler. He got Marilyn Rice-Davies to live with him in 17, Wimpole Mews.

(ii) The Shooting

54. Early in December, 1962, Christine Keeler left John Edgecombe. He determined to get her back if he could. On 14th December, 1962, she went to 17, Wimpole Mews, where she was visiting Marilyn Rice-Davies. At about 1 p.m. John Edgecombe arrived in a mini-cab. He told the driver to wait. Marilyn Rice-Davies looked out of the window. John Edgecombe asked for Christine Keeler. Marilyn Rice-Davies said she was not in. He kept on ringing the bell. After a while Christine Keeler put her head out of the window and told him to go away. He charged at the door to try and break it open. It withstood the charge. He then pulled out an automatic pistol and fired shots at the lock on the front door. Three or four shots. Once more the window upstairs was opened. He pointed the pistol in that direction and shot again. Only a shot or two this time, for he had come to the end of his ammunition. He went back to the mini-cab and got the driver of the mini-cab (who was waiting) to drive him back to Brentford. The police caught up with him there and he was arrested. He was charged, not only with this shooting on 14th December, 1962, but also with the slashing of 'Lucky' Gordon on 27th October, 1962.

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55. Meanwhile, however, the shooting had attracted the attention of the neighbourhood. One of the girls had telephoned Stephen Ward of his surgery in nearby Devonshire Street and gave him a running commentary of what was happening. He heard the shooting over the telephone. He telephoned the police. Wireless messages were sent out from the police station but the newspapermen arrived in the Mews before the police. Maybe they listened in to the messages. The Mews was filled with press and police. The police took the girls to the police station and took statements from them as to the shooting. The station was besieged by the press but eventually the girls got away and went to a flat which Christine Keeler had taken at 63, Great Cumberland Place.

56. After they got back to the flat Christine Keeler telephoned Mr. Michael Eddowes. (He was a retired solicitor who was a friend and patient of Stephen Ward and had seen a good deal of him at this time. He had befriended Christine Keeler and had taken her to see her mother once or twice.) Mr. Eddowes went round to see her. She told him of the shooting. He already knew from Stephen Ward something of her relations with Captain Ivanov and Mr. Profumo, and he asked her about them. He was most interested and subsequently noted it down in writing, and in March he reported it to the police. He followed it up by employing an ex-member of the Metropolitan Police to act as detective on his behalf to gather information.

(iii) Trial Expected First Week of February

57. It was quite plain that Christine Keeler would be an important witness in the case against John Edgecombe, both with regard to the slashing of 'Lucky' Gordon on 27th October, 1962, and also the shooting on 14th December, 1962. John Edgecombe was remanded in custody from time to time and the evidence was not taken by the magistrate until the 16th and 17th January, 1963. Christine Keeler attended the magistrate's hearings quite voluntarily and gave evidence for the prosecution. John Edgecombe was committed for trial at the Old Bailey. His trial was expected to be early in February.

58. On Sunday, the 3rd February, 1963, the *News of the World* published a large picture of Christine Keeler, in a seductive pose, with nothing on except the slightest of swimming garbs, and the words alongside, "Model in shots case. Attractive Christine Keeler, a 20-year-old London model, features in a case at the Old Bailey this week in which a man is accused of shooting at her with intent to murder. He is a 30-year-old West Indian, John Edgecombe, of Brentford, Middlesex." I mention this photograph because most people seeing it would readily infer the avocation of Christine Keeler.

59. The trial of John Edgecombe did not, however, take place that week. The driver of the mini-cab was taken ill. On Friday, 8th February, 1963, a medical certificate was received by the police that he was unable to attend the Court, and it was decided to apply for an adjournment. It was adjourned until March. It came on for trial on 14th March, 1963, but by that time Christine Keeler had disappeared. Meanwhile, however, much had happened. The shooting had been given much notice in the newspapers. Many saw that a story might emerge of much interest. It did.

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CHAPTER V

CHRISTINE TELLS HER STORY

60. On the very night of the shooting Christine Keeler told ~~something~~ of her story to Mr. Michael Eddowes, but it does not seem to have gained publicity through him. She told it later in circles where it was soon taken up.

(i) She tells it to Mr. John Lewis

61. About nine days after the shooting, on 23rd December, 1962, there was a party in a girl's flat in Rossmore Court. Christine Keeler went there with Paul Mann. John Lewis, formerly a Member of Parliament, went to the party with a friend. In the course of conversation the shooting was discussed, Stephen Ward's name was mentioned: and at once old memories revived. John Lewis and Stephen Ward had been engaged actively in litigation in 1954 and 1955 and there was no love lost between them. Christine Keeler said how fearful she was of being called as a witness: John Lewis said she must be represented in court and recommended her to a solicitor. He was most interested in her story and over the next two or three weeks made a point of seeing her and obtaining more details. She told him of her affair with Mr. Profumo and of the letters he had written to her. She also told him that Stephen Ward asked her to obtain information from Mr. Profumo as to the date when the Americans would deliver atom bombs to Germany.

62. John Lewis was at once alive to the importance of the matter from the security point of view. He told Mr. George Wigg, M.P., about it. And from that time onwards he kept Mr. Wigg fully informed of every development. They had conversations almost daily. John Lewis was so interested that he, in March, 1963, got his own agent to investigate in the person of a journalist who spent much of his time in Stephen Ward's flat.

(ii) She tells it to the Press

63. Next on the scene (they had been hovering near all the time) came the press. Christine Keeler told her story to Paul Mann. Now Paul Mann was a young man aged 26. He had been at the Cliveden week-end. He was at this time (December, 1962) in a shirt business in Manchester, but often came down to London at week-ends. He also seems to have friends in journalism. He was friendly both with Stephen Ward and Christine Keeler. Another acquaintance of Christine Keeler's was a woman called Nina Gadd who was a free-lance journalist. It appears to have been indirectly through these two that her story achieved notice. They advised her that there were newspapers who would buy it. Only two possible buyers were mentioned to her. The *News of the World* and the *Sunday Pictorial*. She got in touch with both and tried to see who would pay her most.

64. Christine played off one against the other. When the *Sunday Pictorial* offered her £1,000, she went straight to the *News of the World* and asked them to increase it. Their representative said, "I will see you to the devil. I will not join in any Dutch auction". So the *Sunday Pictorial* ~~submitted~~. On 22nd January, 1963, she went to the office of the *Sunday Pictorial* and

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signed a conditional contract to sell them her story for £1,000, of which £200 was to be paid down and the balance of £800 on completion. She outlined her story and gave it colour by relating her double life—with rich men in high places and coloured men in low. She told them of her relations with Mr. Profumo and with Captain Ivanov. She produced ~~Mr.~~ Profumo's letter of 9th August, 1961 (the 'Darling' letter), in proof ~~that~~ she was telling the truth. The newspaper had it photographed and put it in the safe.

65. Over the next few days the newspaper men took down her story in detail and she then told the reporters (what she had not told them at first) that Stephen Ward had asked her to obtain from Mr. Profumo information as to when the Americans were going to give nuclear weapons to Germany. The newspaper reporters saw how greatly the "spy" interest heightened the story.

(iii) It is set down in writing

66. The reporters of the *Sunday Pictorial* prepared a proof of her story. She signed every page as correct on 8th February, 1963. It is the first signed statement she gave to anyone. (The police did not get a signed statement until 4th April, 1963.) It is on that account instructive to see how she put it. It was in fact never published, but this is how it ran:

"Men are such fools. But I like them. I have always liked them.

Unfortunately, the combination of these things has led me into a lot of trouble and may even have risked the security of this country. It certainly could have been harmful to the country.

You see, one man who was foolish enough and irresponsible enough to have an affair with me was a Cabinet Minister, a member of Her Majesty's Government.

And at the same time I was having an affair with another man—a Russian diplomat.

If that Russian or anyone else had placed a tape recorder or cine camera or both in some hidden place in my bedroom it would have been very embarrassing for the Minister, to say the least.

In fact, it would have left him open to the worst possible kind of blackmail—the blackmail of a spy.

I am not suggesting that he really would have given up State secrets to avoid a scandal. He might have been tough and refused.

But I do believe that any man in his position—particularly a married man—is both unwise and irresponsible to have an affair with some unknown girl like me.

More especially so in this case because this Minister has such knowledge of the military affairs of the Western world that he would be one of the most valuable men in the world for the Russians to have had in their power.

He is, in fact, the Secretary of State for War, Mr. John Profumo.

I believe now that a man in his position should not indulge in pastimes like me. I suppose even Cabinet Ministers are only human, but I think they should curb their feelings when they take on the job.

One might think that as a politician he would have been particularly discreet in the affair. John Profumo was not. It is true he did not take

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me out much, but he did take me to his own home while his wife was away. And he did write letters to me.

One might also think that those responsible for State security would keep some sort of watch on men who hold as many secrets as he holds.

Yet if that happened he would never have been able to come and see me at the flat where I was being visited by the Russian.

And, believe me, the Russian was a man who would be very much aware of the value of the secrets which Profumo knew. He was not a civilian.

He was, in fact, a naval captain, Captain Eugene Ivanov.

Of course, at the time I did not realise the sinister implications behind my two affairs. I was only 18 and knew nothing of politics or international matters. I was not interested.

I did not realise then that blackmail is one of the Russians' favourite weapons when they are trying to recruit traitors or discover secret information.

I am sure that Jack Profumo would not have allowed his harmless affair with me to be used as a lever to prise secrets from him. But a weaker man in his position might have allowed it to happen.

At the time, however, I saw no danger in the situation. It just seemed funny to me that I should be seeing the two men, sometimes on the same day. One might leave my flat only a few minutes before the other arrived.

I did find it worrying when someone asked me to try to get from Profumo the answer to a certain question.

That question was: 'When, if ever, are the Americans going to give nuclear weapons to Germany?'

I am not prepared to say in public who asked me to find out the answer to that question. I am prepared to give it to the security officials. In fact, I believe now that I have a duty to do so."

(iv) She tells the Police

67. On 26th January, 1963, Detective-Sergeant Burrows of the Marylebone Police Station called on Christine Keeler to serve her with notice to attend the trial of John Edgecombe. It was only four days after she had signed her conditional contract with the *Sunday Pictorial*. She then told the Detective-Sergeant in brief outline the self-same story as she told the newspaper. This needs separate treatment and I will deal with it in the next Chapter.

(v) Those who knew

68. By the end of January, 1963, therefore, Christine Keeler had told her story to these people:

- (1) Mr. John Lewis and through him Mr. George Wigg, M.P.
- (2) The newspapers, particularly the *News of the World* and the *Sunday Pictorial*.
- (3) The police through Detective-Sergeant Burrows.
- (4) The Security Service got to know of her story about this time too.

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69. Very shortly afterwards it also came to the knowledge of those at Admiralty House. This I will relate later.

(vi) Captain Ivanov leaves

70. Stephen Ward did not know at first of all this activity by Christine Keeler. He had quarrelled with her for the time being and did not know that she had gone to the newspapers. He had been turned out of his home at 17, Wimpole Mews, because he could not pay the rent and had gone to a flat in Bryanston Mews formerly belonging to Peter Rachman. On 16th January, 1963, he told a journalist all he knew about the shooting and said he had succeeded in keeping out of it and hoped the whole thing would blow over. But it did not. On 18th January, 1963, he saw Captain Ivanov, and it may be presumed that Captain Ivanov took alarm. It seems as if it was what is called a "tip-off". Captain Ivanov left England on 29th January, 1963, much earlier than expected.

(vii) Stephen Ward's alarm

71. The crisis broke upon Stephen Ward on 26th January, 1963, when a journalist went to see him and told him that he had been in contact with the girls and "they are now with the *Sunday Pictorial*". This was the signal for intensive activity by Stephen Ward. He did all he could to stop the publication. On Sunday, 27th January, he went to the private house of his Counsel^(*) and had some discussion with him.

72. On Monday, 28th January, he telephoned to Lord Astor and asked him to meet him on a very, very urgent matter at the chambers of his Counsel: and both he and Lord Astor went to Counsel's chambers. Lord Astor did not stay long but arranged to instruct his own solicitor that afternoon (which he did). Stephen Ward stayed and told the problem to his Counsel: namely, that the trial of John Edgecombe was expected the next week, that Christine Keeler was to be called as a witness and might bring into her evidence the names of Stephen Ward and Mr. Profumo; and that she had sold her story to the *Sunday Pictorial* and it might appear as soon as the trial was concluded. Stephen Ward's Counsel went to see the Solicitor-General and told him. The Solicitor-General passed it on to the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General wrote a note to Mr. Profumo and asked him to come and see him.

73. Meanwhile, in the afternoon of the same day, Lord Astor saw his solicitor: and at 5.30 p.m. Lord Astor went to see Mr. Profumo and told him of the danger. Mr. Profumo at once got into touch with the Head of the Security Service and asked him to come and see him. The Head of the Security Service got the impression that Mr. Profumo hoped he would get a D notice issued or something to stop publication—but his hopes were in vain.

74. Over the next few days there was much going on—so much so that I must divide it into sections so as to show what was done by the police, the lawyers, and the Ministers of the Crown. But there were also two meetings of the principals. Mr. Profumo wanted to know more about it all. He and Stephen Ward had lunch together with Lord Astor in Lord Astor's London house. Then Mr. Profumo wanted "to get a bit more out of Ward" and he met him at the Dorchester Hotel. Stephen Ward told him the newspaper had a letter which started "Darling" and ended "Love J."

(*) Mr. Rees-Davies, M.P.

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CHAPTER VI

THE POLICE ARE TOLD

(i) The Ordinary Police Force

75. No one can understand the actions of the police in the Profumo affair unless it is realised that their primary task is to maintain law and order: in particular it is their duty to enforce the criminal law, and in this respect they are completely independent of the Home Office. It is no part of their duty to pry into the private lives of anyone, be it a Minister of the Crown or the humblest citizen. And if, in the course of their inquiries, they come across discreditable incidents in private lives (not amounting to a criminal offence) it is no part of their duty to report it to anyone. We are not yet a "police state". Even if they come across discreditable incidents in the life of a Minister, they are not to report it—save only if it appears that the security of the country may be endangered, when they should report it to the Security Service.

(ii) Special Branch

76. So much for what I may call the ordinary police force. There is also the 'Special Branch' of the Metropolitan Police. This was formed in 1886 to deal with Irish Republican activity. From that time it has developed so that its main activities are as follows:

- (1) It is concerned with subversive or terrorist organisations. So one of its duties is to obtain information regarding them and pass it to the Security Service.
- (2) It is also concerned with offences against the security of the State, such as treason, espionage, offences against the Official Secrets Act and the Public Order Act. If the Security Service, for instance, detect a spy, they collect the information and material about the case and then pass it to Special Branch. The Special Branch make any necessary searches or arrests, and prepare the case for trial. Conversely, if Special Branch comes across material which points to a risk to national security, they pass it to the Security Service for their information.
- (3) It keeps watch on seaports and airports for criminals and other dangerous persons: makes inquiries into aliens: and so forth.

77. There is very close co-operation between the Special Branch and the Security Service. They work together in harmony and each has the fullest confidence in the other.

(iii) The Working of the Ordinary Police

78. The various cases that figure in the Profumo affair illustrate very clearly the working of the ordinary police. In the *Edgecombe* case the ordinary police force handled it in the accustomed manner. On being informed of the shooting, they went at once to the scene, made investigations, then an arrest, afterwards took statements, and conducted the case right

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through to trial. In the *Gordon* case, too, as soon as the attack on Christine Keeler was reported, they acted in a similar manner. Likewise with the *Ward* case. This came to their notice through anonymous communications. They looked into it to see if there was anything to investigate: and finding there was, they took statements which eventually disclosed a case against him, as a result of which they arrested him and conducted the case to trial.

79. The important point for present purposes is, however, this: In the course of the conduct of the *Edgecombe* case, the ordinary police officers came across information which might have a security significance and the question is whether it was handled properly by them, or by Special Branch, or, later on, by the Security Service.

(iv) Christine Keeler tells the Police

80. On Saturday, 26th January, 1963, Detective-Sergeant Burrows of the Marylebone Police Station went to warn Christine Keeler and Marilyn Rice-Davies that they were required to attend at the Central Criminal Court at the trial of John Edgecombe. He served recognisance notices on them and then Christine Keeler voluntarily made a statement to him (I give it from the note he made and in the very form he reported it to his superiors):

"She said that Doctor Ward was a procurer of women for gentlemen in high places and was sexually perverted: that he had a country cottage at Cliveden to which some of these women were taken to meet important men—the cottage was on the estate of Lord Astor; that he had introduced her to Mr. John Profumo and that she had had an association with him; that Mr. Profumo had written a number of letters to her on War Office notepaper and that she was still in possession of one of these letters which was being considered for publication in the *Sunday Pictorial* to whom she had sold her life story for £1,000. She also said that on one occasion when she was going to meet Mr. Profumo, Ward had asked her to discover from him the date on which certain atomic secrets were to be handed to West Germany by the Americans, and that this was at the time of the Cuban crisis. She also said that she had been introduced by Ward to the Naval Attaché of the Soviet Embassy and had met him on a number of occasions."

81. It is to be noticed that that statement of Christine Keeler contains in concise form the very gist of all the important matters—the procurement of women by Stephen Ward—the association of Mr. Profumo with Christine Keeler—the request for information about atomic secrets—and the Ivanov relationship.

(v) A Meeting is Arranged

82. Detective-Sergeant Burrows reported it to his superior, Detective-Inspector Anning, who thought it was outside the field of criminal matter for the Special Branch. So he telephoned to Detective-Inspector Morgan of Special Branch. He thought it of considerable security importance and thought that Christine Keeler should be seen by Special Branch. He arranged a meeting for Detective-Sergeant Burrows and himself to see her. Whilst he was making inquiries Christine Keeler told the police at Marylebone that she believed that Ward, in an endeavour to "have her put away", was

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alleging that she was in possession of drugs. So it was thought ~~advisable~~ to have the assistance of an officer conversant with drugs. Arrangements were made for her to be seen at 3.30 p.m. on Friday, 1st February, 1963, at her flat, No. 63, Great Cumberland Place. The officers who were to go were Detective-Sergeant Burrows (from Marylebone, who had seen her first), Detective-Inspector Morgan (of Special Branch because of the security interest) and Sergeant Howard of the Drug Squad (because of the drug suggestion).

(vi) The Meeting is Cancelled

83. It was most unfortunate that this meeting was never held. Christine Keeler was not seen at all by the police, or at any rate no statement was taken from her, from the day when she was seen by Detective-Sergeant Burrows on 26th January, 1963 (which I have set out), until 4th April, 1963, when inquiries were being made into the case against Stephen Ward.

84. The first question arises, therefore, why was the meeting not held on 1st February, 1963? It was cancelled by order of the Commander of Special Branch. When the proposal was put before him on the morning of 1st February he decided that Special Branch should not take part in questioning Christine Keeler. He did this, he told me, because of the Press. He thought it inevitable that the Press would get to know that Christine Keeler had been seen by Special Branch and that would cause a lot of speculation. (He expected that Christine Keeler might well tell the Press herself that she had been seen by a Special Branch officer.) After discussion with his Deputy Commander, it was decided to be better that Christine Keeler and Stephen Ward should be seen by officers of the Criminal Investigation Department: and that anything coming to light, which was of interest to Special Branch, should be brought to their notice. In consequence of this decision the Deputy Commander sent out a message cancelling the meeting arranged for the afternoon of Friday, 1st February, 1963. No reason was given to the Marylebone officers. It was just cancelled. Detective-Sergeant Burrows accordingly telephoned Christine Keeler and said he could not keep the appointment that afternoon, but would contact her again at some future date.

85. The second question arises, why was Christine Keeler not seen at all at this time, not even by officers of the Criminal Investigation Department? This was the decision of a Chief Superintendent of the Department. The Deputy Commander of Special Branch told me that he made it clear that he wished Christine Keeler to be seen, but the Chief Superintendent of the Criminal Investigation Department told me that the message, as it reached him, was that Stephen Ward was to be seen, but nothing was said, he told me, about seeing Christine Keeler. There must have been some failure in co-ordination on this point. Arrangements were in fact only made for Stephen Ward to be seen. An appointment was made for Stephen Ward to be seen at Scotland Yard on Saturday, 2nd February, 1963, by a Drug Squad official but Ward did not keep the appointment. In consequence on Monday, 4th February, 1963, the Chief Superintendent decided not to make another appointment for him. In addition, on the same day he was asked by Special Branch whether he intended to have Christine Keeler seen, and he said he did not. This was, I think, an unfortunate decision: for it meant that she was not seen by any police officer at all at that time. There must have been another failure in co-ordination at

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this point. The decision was recorded in this minute by a Superintendent of Special Branch:

"The Chief Superintendent of Criminal Investigation does not propose making another appointment (for Ward), nor does he intend to have Miss Keeler seen. I told the Chief Superintendent that this was agreeable to Special Branch and we are not asking him to take any other action."

86. It is quite plain from this last sentence that the Superintendent of Special Branch did not regard it as important to see Christine Keeler. He told me that he thought the crime interest was greater than any security risk. Accepting this view, nevertheless in view of Christine Keeler's statement to Detective-Sergeant Burrows it does appear that there was a security interest which should have been watched: and the Deputy Commander of Special Branch certainly intended her to be seen.

(vii) Stephen Ward tells the Police

87. So much for Christine Keeler's statement. There was a statement by Stephen Ward at this time which was also of importance. On 4th February, 1963, at 6.20 p.m., Stephen Ward himself telephoned to the Marylebone Lane Station and said that two photographs had been stolen from him. They were photographs taken at the swimming pool at Cliveden. One was taken by Mr. Profumo and showed Stephen Ward with three girls, one of whom was Christine Keeler. Mr. Profumo had written on it "The new Cliveden Set, 'J.'." The other was taken by someone else showing Mr. Profumo with two girls, one of whom was Christine Keeler. The Marylebone officers asked him to come to the station and he did so on 5th February, 1963. Stephen Ward said he thought Paul Mann had stolen the photographs to sell. He also made this statement (I give it from the note made by the officer as it was reported to his superior):

"Dr. Ward said that, if this matter, including the association between Mr. Profumo and Miss Keeler, became public, it might very well 'bring down' the Government. He also added that he had no personal liking for this Government but would not like to see it go out of office in this way. He also said that he was aware that Miss Keeler had sold her life story to the *Sunday Pictorial* newspaper and that a number of names would be mentioned. Ward also said that he was a close friend of the Naval Attaché of the Soviet Embassy, who frequently visited him and who was known in diplomatic circles as 'Foxface'. He produced a photograph which he said had been taken at an official Iron Curtain party and in it he appeared standing alongside 'Foxface'. He also said he had mentioned the matter to a member of M.I. 5."

88. It is to be noticed, too, that this statement of Stephen Ward's contained direct reference to two important matters—the association of Mr. Profumo and Christine Keeler, and Stephen Ward's friendship for Ivanov.

(viii) The Police tell the Security Service

89. We have at this point, therefore, two important statements to the police—one by Christine Keeler on 26th January, 1963, and the other by Stephen Ward on 5th February, 1963. The Marylebone officers embodied

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these in a written report dated 5th February, 1963. (They were in the very terms I have quoted.) It was a pity that Christine Keeler had not been seen as intended: for if she had been seen, she might well have filled in much important detail (such as the description of Mr. Profumo's house, or the mascot on the car) which would have corroborated her story, and she might have thrown light on Stephen Ward's activities. It is a pity, too, that Stephen Ward was not seen by officers of Scotland Yard as intended: for a detailed statement from him at that time might have had important consequences.

90. But nevertheless the report itself of the Marylebone officer gave the gist of all the important matters. It may be asked, what did Special Branch do about this important report? They did the correct thing. They took it along to the Security Service. The report reached Special Branch on Thursday, 7th February, 1963, and was considered by the Commander himself. He at once went and saw a senior officer of the Security Service. He took a copy of the report and left it with him. He asked two pertinent questions:

- (a) Was there any security intelligence aspect which should influence Criminal Investigation Department action? The Security Officer said, No.
- (b) Did any duty lie on Scotland Yard to ensure that Mr. Profumo was aware of the likelihood of publicity? The Security Officer said that Mr. Profumo was aware of it.

91. The Commander went back and drew up this minute:

"The facts given in (the report) were already known to (the Security Service) in broad outline. Their principal interest is, of course, the Russian diplomat, whose identity is known to them and in whose activities they are taking an interest. Officially they are not concerned with the Profumo aspect, but they do know that Profumo is aware of the position and that such action as is possible is being taken by his solicitors with the newspaper. They believe it to be true that Profumo has told the Prime Minister of the matter but they do not know that for certain.

I think it wise for us to stay out of this business and (the Security Service) agree."

92. The upshot of it all is that the Marylebone officers were aware of the security and political importance of Christine Keeler's and Stephen Ward's statements, and reported them to Special Branch. No possible criticism can be made of the Marylebone officers. But the Criminal Investigation Department and Special Branch did, I think, make an error in not following up these reports by seeing Christine Keeler, or making sure she was seen, or by seeing Stephen Ward. This error was due to an error in co-ordination, for which no one individual can be blamed. But allowing for this error, the gist of the information was passed on by Special Branch to the Security Service. And thenceforward the responsibility for further action rested with the Security Service. I will deal with this when I consider the operation of the Security Service.

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93. It may be asked why did not the police themselves report these matters to the Home Secretary. The answer is, I think, this: In so far as if involved a security matter they fulfilled their duty by reporting it to the Special Branch. In so far as it involved private morals it would not be for them to report it to anyone. It would be contrary to our way of thinking that police should be expected to report to the Home Secretary, or indeed to the Prime Minister, anything they happen incidentally to discover affecting the moral character or behaviour of any individual, including even a Minister of the Crown.

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CHAPTER VII

THE LAWYERS ARE CALLED IN

(i) Disturbing Facts

94. No one can understand what happened at this time unless he realises the extreme anxiety felt by Stephen Ward, Mr. Profumo and, I may add, Lord Astor, over the critical 10 days, Monday, 28th January, 1963-Wednesday, 6th February, 1963. They were very anxious that nothing should be disclosed prejudicial to their good names. Each instructed lawyers to protect his interests. And, as it happened, the main burden was borne by Stephen Ward's Counsel^(*) and by Mr. Profumo's solicitors.^(†) By Friday, 1st February, 1963, they had discovered these disturbing facts:

- (1) They got to know Christine Keeler had signed a conditional contract to sell her story to the *Sunday Pictorial* for £1,000, of which £200 was paid down: but they did not know what her story contained. In particular they did not know what she had told the newspaper about Stephen Ward, Mr. Profumo or Lord Astor. They got to know that arrangements had been made for her to sign the proofs of her story early in the week beginning Monday, 4th February, and also for her to be accommodated, at the expense of the newspaper, in a flat at The White House, Albany Street. Once the proofs were signed by her as correct, the newspaper would be free to publish the article without fear of any libel action by her, though they would, of course, be liable to libel actions if they made defamatory statements which were untrue about anyone else.
- (2) They got to know that the case of John Edgcombe was in the list for trial at the Session at the Central Criminal Court starting on Tuesday, 5th February, and Christine Keeler might have to attend any day. The case was expected to be tried that week, and should be finished by the Friday. Christine Keeler was to be an important witness and might be subjected to cross-examination as to her credit and as to her character, and she might bring out their names. Until the trial was over the newspaper might not feel able to print her story, because the matter might be prejudicial to the trial and a contempt of court. Once the case was over the newspaper would be able to publish the articles without fear of being in contempt of court.

(ii) Plans to Stop Publication

95. It was important therefore to do everything possible in law to stop the newspaper publishing the story of Christine Keeler. Here the lawyers were in a difficulty. In the ordinary way it is very difficult to get an injunction to stop the publication of defamatory matter: for if the defendants swear that the words are true and that they intend to justify them, the court will rarely intervene to stop them: for the court will not pre-judge the question whether the words are true or not. But in this case there appeared a way

^(*) Stephen Ward's Counsel was Mr. Rees-Davies, M.P., in all the stages in this Chapter.

^(†) Theodore Goddard & Co.

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to overcome that rule of law. Christine Keeler had told her story to several people, including newspaper reporters, and it had been repeated by others. It was suggested that a writ for slander be issued against her and others, in respect of those statements. If such a writ were issued and the newspapers were notified of it, the matter would become *sub judice*. The newspapers would not, it was thought, publish her story because they would be in danger of being in contempt of court—in respect of the slander action. This plan required a good deal of work, such as taking statements from witnesses, preparing draft writs and so forth.

(iii) Negotiations to that end

96. While preparing that plan, however, for legal proceedings, an alternative proposal was made, namely, to see Christine Keeler, to see how far she had gone with the newspaper and see if she could be persuaded not to publish her story. There were long conferences between Stephen Ward's counsel and Mr. Profumo's solicitor on Saturday and Sunday, 2nd and 3rd February, 1963. Both felt that, if negotiations of this kind were to be pursued, it was very desirable that Christine Keeler, for her own protection, should be advised by a solicitor. It was essential that she should *not* be advised by the solicitor to the newspaper, but be separately advised by her own solicitor. In a day or two, Christine Keeler did go to a solicitor. It appears that on Saturday afternoon, 2nd February, 1963, Mr. Profumo's solicitors went to see her, and, after some discussion about the contract, gave her the name of a solicitor and also their own telephone number. The impression they got was that she wanted money. But she did not go to the solicitor that they suggested. Then Stephen Ward's counsel suggested the name of another solicitor. He was a young man who was a former pupil of his at the bar and had since become a solicitor.^(*) On Sunday, 3rd February, 1963, Stephen Ward's counsel asked this young solicitor to come and see him and told him the outline of the story. There was an intervening approach through a friend and on the 4th February, 1963, at 4.30 p.m., Christine Keeler went to see this solicitor. She was accompanied, not by this friend, but by Paul Mann.

97. It is quite clear that the negotiations had these objectives: on the one hand Christine Keeler was to withdraw from her contract with the newspaper, so that her story would not be published, and she was to go away for a while immediately after the Edgcombe trial: on the other hand she was in return to be paid compensation in money for the loss of her contract and for the expenses to which she would be put.

98. The negotiations are of importance: because in the debate on 17th June, 1963, it was suggested by Sir Lionel Heald, Q.C., M.P., in the House of Commons that on 4th February, 1963, there was an approach which appeared to indicate a demand for money.

(iv) The Law on the Matter

99. Now I desire to say, in fairness to all concerned, that there was nothing unlawful in these negotiations, provided always that Christine Keeler had not the intention to extort money, but only to receive a fair recompense.

^(*) Mr. Gerald Black of Gerald Black & Co.

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The law on the matter is laid down in Section 31 (2) of the Larceny Act, 1916, which says that "every person who, with intent to extort any valuable thing from any person directly or indirectly proposes to abstain there, or offers to prevent, the publishing of any matter or thing touching any other person, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour". I have italicised the important words for present purposes. The words "any matter or thing" show that, whatever the matter about to be published, that is to say, whether it be libel or no libel (see *Regina v. Coghlan* (1865) 4 Foster and Finlayson 316 at page 321 by Bramwell B): true or untrue (see *Rex v. Wyatt* (1921) 16 Criminal Appeal Reports 57), nevertheless it is an offence to propose to abstain from the publishing of it, if it is done with intent to extort money. There need not be an express request for money. It can be implied. Even to say "If you make it worth my while, nothing will appear in the Press" will suffice, provided always there is an intention to extort money. (See *Regina v. Menage* 3 Foster and Finlayson 310.) Truth is no answer to the charge. The greater the truth the greater the weapon in the hand of the blackmailer. The gist of the offence is the intention to extort. Such is the law if done by one alone. If the attempt to extort is done by two or more in combination—by threatening exposure even of the truth—it is indictable as a conspiracy at common law (see *Rex v. Hollingberry* (1825) 4 Barnwell and Cresswell 329).

(v) Critical Conversations

100. Now for the negotiations themselves. There is some controversy as to what took place which I feel I cannot resolve. So I set down the versions on either side of the critical conversations. The name of Paul Mann comes again into the story at this point. During these critical days of early February, 1963, Stephen Ward and Christine Keeler had quarrelled, but Paul Mann still remained friendly with both and acted as intermediary between them. On Saturday evening, 2nd February, 1963, Stephen Ward took Paul Mann to see Stephen Ward's counsel in his private house and counsel saw him alone. According to counsel's note made shortly afterwards Paul Mann said: "I think that Christine should be made to deny everything and talk propositionwise as to what it is worth for her to be quiet. I think she is open to a higher bid. She is not satisfied with £1,000. I told her she ought to have obtained a good deal more." According to Paul Mann himself, he said, "I was myself quite concerned with people's reputations and one thing and another and the possible scandal that the papers could make of the whole thing. I said I did not know what she was going to do, but I said I would be only too willing to take her away after the trial and to keep the Press away from her. I remember saying too, that I certainly could not do it all on my own funds, but I was quite prepared to make it a holiday for myself. There were no sums mentioned." Both agreed that counsel broke off the conversation and said he could not discuss the proposition, and told Paul Mann that he should get Christine Keeler to go and see a solicitor.

101. On Monday afternoon, 4th February, 1963, at about 4.30 p.m., Paul Mann accompanied Christine Keeler to the solicitor whose name had been mentioned by Stephen Ward's counsel (paragraph 96). She went in to see the solicitor whilst Paul Mann sat outside next to the switchboard. She brought with her the telephone number of Mr. Profumo's solicitor: and after taking her instructions, the solicitor telephoned Mr. Profumo's solicitor.

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There is a controversy as to the opening words: Christine Keeler's solicitor says that he said to Mr. Profumo's solicitor, "I understand your clients have offered to help her financially", and he said "Yes": whereas Mr. Profumo's solicitor denies that any such opening took place. Save for that controversy it seems clear that the substance of the conversation was as follows:

(vi) Christine asks for £5,000

102. Christine Keeler's solicitor told Mr. Profumo's solicitor that he was acting for Christine, that she did not wish to harm Mr. Profumo in any way, but she had no one to turn to for financial assistance except the newspaper. She was due to see the newspaper later that afternoon and the newspaper had arranged for her to stay at the White House. If she did not continue to help the newspaper with the publication she would be without money. Christine Keeler's solicitor said he thought that the criminal proceedings against John Edgcombe would probably be on that week and that she intended to go away after the trial. She proposed to go abroad, to America. She was to receive from the newspaper £1,500 for six articles or £1,000 for four. Christine Keeler's solicitor said they did not want to publish and that the matter was a delicate one. One of them asked the other what he had in mind (there is some controversy on this) and after a little to and fro Christine Keeler's solicitor said £3,000. Mr. Profumo's solicitor said he would take instructions. A very short time later, however, Christine Keeler's solicitor (who had Christine present with him) telephoned to Mr. Profumo's solicitor and said that she would need £5,000 as she wanted to get a house for her parents. Mr. Profumo's solicitor said he would have to put the matter to his client. Christine's solicitor said he would await an answer. None came; so he himself telephoned, but was told Mr. Profumo's solicitor had gone out.

(vii) Was it an Offence?

103. Meanwhile what had happened was this: Mr. Profumo's solicitors regarded the request for £5,000 as so serious that they went round that evening to seek the advice of Queen's Counsel,^(*) and then, with him and Mr. Profumo, they went to see the Attorney-General, Sir John Hobson, and told him of it. The Attorney-General thought it should be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Mr. Profumo said that he was prepared to prosecute, if the Director thought it desirable. The next morning Mr. Profumo's legal advisers explained the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions who advised against a prosecution.

104. In view of what I have said earlier on the law, the question whether there was an offence or no in asking for money depended on whether there was an intent to extort or not. If it was a fair recompense, there would be nothing unlawful. Upon this point Christine Keeler's solicitor explained to me that, in mentioning £3,000 he was thinking of what it would cost to have her represented by counsel, what it would cost to have her protected at the trial by an ex-C.I.D. officer or something like that, what it would cost to put her parents in a house somewhere, and that she wanted to go off to America after the trial of John Edgcombe for a holiday. After

(*) Mr. Mark Littman, Q.C.

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he put the telephone down Christine Keeler said, "I think you ought to have asked for £5,000. How much is the house going to cost?" The solicitor said, "£2,000 up to £3,000." She said, "It will cost me £500 whilst I am away in America. I would like to have something to come back to. I would like you to phone and say £5,000." So he did so.

105. I would like to say, in fairness to Christine Keeler's solicitor, that he had only been brought into the case at very short notice and had no time to reflect. It was a situation entirely out of the ordinary. He told me he thought the £5,000 was nothing to the persons concerned and it did seem a pretty fair estimate of what Christine Keeler would be involved in. Having seen him, I am sure he had no intention to extort and ought fairly to be excused for what does look, I confess, at first sight a most unjustifiable suggestion.

106. As for Christine Keeler, it is only fair to say that, if she had been minded to blackmail Mr. Profumo, she would probably have kept the 'Darling' letter herself and not handed it over to the *Sunday Pictorial*. Further, I would record her statement to me: When £3,000 was mentioned, she says, "I said No, and I know this sounds wicked, I said £5,000 because I wanted to move my parents, you see, so I do admit that I did say to raise it. . . . It was not a matter of blackmail. I would have asked for £50,000 if it was." Let no one judge her too harshly. She was not yet 21. And since the age of 16 she had become enmeshed in a net of wickedness. I would credit her, too, with a desire only for a fair recompense and not an intention to extort.

107. It is quite clear that after the telephone conversation on 4th February, 1963, Mr. Profumo's solicitors had no negotiations with Christine Keeler or anyone on her behalf to pay her any money. But Stephen Ward's counsel had negotiations with Christine's solicitors to which I must now turn.

(viii) Negotiations with Stephen Ward

108. On the next day, 5th February, 1963, Christine Keeler's solicitor was speaking, he told me, to Ward's counsel on another matter, and afterwards they got on to the subject of Christine. Christine's solicitor said he was acting for her and said, "She says she would like to have five" (meaning £5,000). Stephen Ward's counsel (presumably acting on behalf of Stephen Ward) said, "Oh, I am sure that will be all right, I will let you know". Christine's solicitor said it was most urgent. That afternoon Christine's solicitor went and collected £50 in cash from Stephen Ward's counsel. Christine's solicitor gave her £20 of the £50 and she agreed not to go to the White House (the flat provided by the newspaper) and did not go. Next day Christine's solicitor went to collect the balance of the £5,000, as he thought. Stephen Ward's counsel gave him a packet which he opened. Inside was £450. It then became clear, he told me, that when he had said "five" on the telephone, Stephen Ward's counsel had thought he meant £500, not £5,000. Christine's solicitor said he could not take the £450. He went back and told her what had happened. She thought she had been tricked. She would not dream of accepting the money. She would ~~plain~~ That is the last the solicitor saw of her.

109. Stephen Ward's counsel gave me an account which corresponded in most of the essentials. He told me that when Christine's solicitor said she wanted "five in expenses", he took it to mean £500, not £5,000. This accorded

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exactly with what the expenses were to his mind. He worked them out in this way: As she had already received £200 from the newspaper, she ought to repay it to them. That made £200. Then she ought to be accommodated in a hotel over the trial which would cost £100. And she ought to have £200 to be away after the trial for the next fortnight. Stephen Ward's counsel told me that Christine's solicitor said it was most urgent and, on that account, he did let him have £50 in cash out of his own pocket that afternoon. On the next day he reported it to his solicitor who also thought £500 was a proper sum. So he made arrangements with Stephen Ward and got the money from him. He offered the £450 to Christine's solicitor: but he did not accept it.

110. Stephen Ward got the £500 in this way. He asked Lord Astor to lend it to him: and Lord Astor (after consulting his solicitor) did lend it to him. But Stephen Ward did not disclose to Lord Astor the precise purpose of the £500. The knowledge which Lord Astor had is shown by two letters of 6th February which record the transaction. Stephen Ward wrote on 6th February:

"Dear Bill,

As I told you I have become involved in legal proceedings which are likely to involve me in heavy expenses and if you could lend me £500 I should be very grateful indeed.

Yours ever,
Stephen "

Lord Astor replied on the same day, 6th February:

"So sorry to hear of your difficulty—I will be very glad to lend you £500. Pay me back when you can, or you can work some of it off in treatment, should I have any sprains, bruises or hunting accidents."

At the same time Lord Astor drew a cheque for £500 in Stephen Ward's favour dated 6th February, 1963. Stephen Ward had no banking account so he could not pay it into his own account. But the cheque, or the cash it represented, came into the hands of his counsel. He repaid himself the £50 and offered the £450 to Christine's solicitor.

(ix) The £500 goes to Stephen Ward

111. After £450 was refused Stephen Ward's solicitor collected the £450 from counsel that afternoon and placed it to the credit of Stephen Ward on their client's account. There it remained until it was withdrawn by Stephen Ward as to £150 on 20th February, 1963, and the balance on 15th March, 1963. Stephen Ward used the money to pay his rent and other personal debts. None of it went to Christine Keeler or anyone on her behalf.

(x) Christine goes back to the Newspapers

112. Pending the negotiations about £5,000, Christine Keeler had not gone to sign the proofs of her article for the newspaper. She had made excuses and kept away. But when the negotiations broke down she went back to the newspaper. She went and signed the proofs. That was on 8th February, 1963.

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CHAPTER VIII

MINISTERS ARE CONCERNED

113. The Ministers were concerned from a very early stage. Mr. Profumo saw the Attorney-General on 28th January, 1963, before he saw any lawyer of his own. And a week later, on 4th February, 1963, he saw the Chief Whip. These Ministers played a very important part in what took place.

(i) The Law Officers

114. No one can understand the part played by the Law Officers in the Profumo affair unless he realises that by a convention which is well accepted, any of the Ministers of the Crown (who thinks he may be involved in litigation) is entitled to consult the Law Officers and ask their advice. In particular, when a Minister feels that his good name is being assailed, he is entitled to consult the Law Officers and ask them whether anything said about him is actionable as a libel or slander: and if it is, whether it is convenient from the point of view of the Government that he should bring an action.

115. It must also be remembered that at the end of January, or early February, 1963, the Law Officers were closely concerned with Lord Radcliffe's enquiry into the Vassall case. They had given advice to the Ministers whose names were mentioned there. They had very much in mind the position of Mr. Galbraith. Here was a Minister against whom allegations had been made, and who had resigned his office. Rumours had spread about him in the Press and in the House of Commons. Yet the evidence against him had, in the course of the inquiry, been shown to be utterly false, and the charge had been disproved. The inquiry had not been concluded—it was not concluded until 5th April, 1963—but the Law Officers had already heard enough to be able to form a good opinion as to the outcome.

116. Such is the background. On 28th January, 1963, Stephen Ward's counsel asked to see the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General was engaged at the Vassall case. So the Solicitor-General saw him instead. Stephen Ward's counsel told the Solicitor-General that a young girl proposed to write a story for a newspaper, telling of her relationship with various people, amongst whom was Lord Astor and Mr. Profumo. The Solicitor-General felt that, as Mr. Profumo's name was mentioned, the Law Officers were interested. And when the Attorney-General got back from the Vassall case at 4.30 p.m., the Solicitor-General said to him: "Here is another of these rumours concerning another Minister, Mr. Profumo". As a Minister was involved the Attorney-General thought it was his duty to see whether he was going to bring a libel action and, if so, to say he was available to help. So the Attorney-General wrote him a note asking him to come and see him. And that night at about 11 p.m. Mr. Profumo went to see the Attorney-General at his own home.

(ii) The Attorney-General Interviews Mr. Profumo

117. As this first interview is of considerable importance I must deal with it in some detail. The Attorney-General began by telling Mr. Profumo

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that he must be absolutely frank with him, and that unless he was going to tell the truth, he was not prepared to help him. Mr. Profumo told the Attorney-General that he had first met Christine Keeler at ~~Chester~~ when his wife and many other people were present. That shortly after he had gone to Stephen Ward's flat for a drink at his invitation and that thereafter he had done so on several occasions when Christine Keeler was among the guests. Mr. Profumo said that twice when he arrived Christine Keeler was there alone and there had been a period when they were alone together before other people arrived. Mr. Profumo asserted the complete innocence of his friendship with her and said that not only had there been no adultery but no sexual impropriety of any kind whatsoever. Mr. Profumo said that he recollected having written to her one short note which he thought began with the word 'darling' telling her that he could not come to a cocktail party. He wrote this note, he said, on the day when he had been seen by the security people and warned by them not to go to Stephen Ward's flat, because one of Ward's friends was a member of the Russian Embassy. Mr. Profumo said that this was the total limit of his acquaintance with this girl. He had now heard that, based on this association and the one letter, Christine Keeler (who had recently become a drug addict and had been sleeping with West Indians and was short of money) was proposing to sell a false story to the newspapers which would ruin him.

118. The Attorney-General questioned Mr. Profumo about everything which he told him and emphasised again the vital importance of his telling him the complete truth. He told him that if there was any truth in these rumours, he would have to resign. Mr. Profumo reiterated the complete innocence of his friendship with Christine Keeler and explained that he commonly used the word 'darling' but said this was of no consequence as, being married to an actress, he had got into the habit of using this term of endearment which was quite meaningless.

119. The Attorney-General told Mr. Profumo that if his story was true, he would have to take proceedings as soon as he had proof of any publication of any such story. Mr. Profumo again repeated that there was nothing in these rumours. The Attorney-General then advised him to instruct the best possible solicitors and, that day or next morning, suggested that he should get in touch with Mr. Derek Clogg, a senior partner in Theodore Goddard & Co., a solicitor of high repute and wide experience.

120. After hearing Mr. Profumo's story the Attorney-General was suspicious. He thought it was rather odd. And he retained a reasonable incredulity about it. He reported the matter to the Chief Whip and discussed the matter with the Solicitor-General.

(iii) The Solicitor-General comes in

121. A few days later the Attorney-General went to Mr. Profumo's room, and he asked the Solicitor-General to come too. The Solicitor-General emphasised to Mr. Profumo how vital it was, in his own interests and those of everyone, that he should be absolutely frank. Mr. Profumo said he understood that, and he repeated more shortly and in broad outline what he had told the Attorney-General on 28th January, adding that at one of the

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cocktail parties he had given Christine Keeler a lighter which was not at all valuable but which she had admired when he used it. The Solicitor-General asked Mr. Profumo whether in those circumstances he was prepared to issue a writ for slander or libel if he was advised that a proper opportunity presented itself. Mr. Profumo said that he most certainly would, even if it were against a friend or colleague. The Solicitor-General reminded him of the effect of such a course of action if there was any chance for any defendant attempting to justify and could prove that Mr. Profumo had been guilty of adultery. Mr. Profumo replied that he was aware of that, but that not every man who was alone with a woman and called her "darling" committed adultery with her. Whatever might be said, he was not guilty of any improper conduct with Christine Keeler or of anything except the friendship of which he had told the Attorney-General. Mr. Profumo said that he appreciated that of course it now all looked different, particularly because of the deterioration in manner and recent conduct of the girl, but that at the time when he knew her she was very different. Mr. Profumo said that he knew that (because of those few meetings and because he had been alone with her only for a short time and before others had arrived) he now faced ruin for himself and his family. He knew, he said, that in the particular climate of opinion then prevailing (the Radcliffe Tribunal was still sitting) there would be those who would disbelieve him, but that it would be grossly unfair that he should be driven from public life and into ruin when he was totally innocent and that he should become a victim of malevolent gossip, some of which was seeking to do to him what it had tried to do shortly before to one of his colleagues. Mr. Profumo insisted again, with vehemence, that he had not committed adultery and that, although he would naturally prefer that the gossip should die down, if anything was ever published or if he could identify a gossip-monger, he would sue, no matter who it was.

(iv) *Mr. Profumo's Story Accepted*

122. On Sunday evening, 3rd February, Mr. Profumo came with his solicitor (Mr. Clogg) to see the Attorney-General at his home. There was a general discussion in which Mr. Clogg made it clear that Mr. Profumo had told him just the same as he had previously told the Attorney-General. In particular that Mr. Profumo's relationship with Christine Keeler was entirely innocent.

123. On Monday evening, 4th February, the Attorney-General again saw Mr. Profumo. Mr. Profumo had with him his leading counsel and his solicitor. They reported to the Attorney-General the request for £5,000 made by Christine Keeler, through her solicitor, to Mr. Profumo (I have described this in paragraph 103). The Attorney-General thought it was serious and advised Mr. Profumo that the facts should be placed before the Director of Public Prosecutions. The Attorney-General took the view that there would only be an offence if the proposed publication was untrue and libellous: (?) and he was impressed by the fact that Mr. Profumo was ready to prosecute. If a prosecution was brought, Mr. Profumo would have to give evidence on oath about his relationship with Christine Keeler.

(?) Note.—I do not myself share this view. Even if true, it would, I think, be an offence, if done with intent to extort. See paragraph 99.

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124. Up till this time the Attorney-General had been dubious whether Mr. Profumo was telling the truth. He was keeping the matter in suspense. But when he found that Mr. Profumo was prepared to bring an action for libel, and had actually instructed his solicitor to do so, and that he was prepared to prosecute on the request for £5,000, he did not see how he could disbelieve Mr. Profumo, and decided there was no reason why he should not accept his story. We now know that on Tuesday, 5th February, 1963, Mr. Profumo and his solicitor did see the Director of Public Prosecutions who advised against a prosecution. But that does not affect the argument. What impressed the Attorney-General was the readiness of Mr. Profumo to prosecute.

(v) The Chief Whip

125. No one can understand the role of the Chief Whip (Mr. Martin Redmayne, M.P.) in this matter unless he realises that he is very concerned with the good name of the Government and the Ministers who comprise it. If rumours are about which may embarrass the Government, it is the business of the Chief Whip to know of them and to report them to the Prime Minister. The Chief Whip was very concerned at this time with the rumours about Mr. Galbraith (which were subsequently shown in Lord Radcliffe's inquiry to be completely unfounded). So he was concerned here with the rumours about Mr. Profumo.

(vi) 1st February, 1963—A Newspaper call at Admiralty House

126. In order to see how the Chief Whip came into the matter, I must first refer to a very important thing which happened. On the afternoon of Friday, 1st February, 1963, a senior executive of a newspaper telephoned Admiralty House and asked to see the Prime Minister. But the Prime Minister was away in Italy and would not be back until the evening of Sunday, 3rd February. So the executive called at Admiralty House and gave this information to one of his Secretaries, who recorded it in this note:

"The object of his call concerned a security matter. . . . Mr. Profumo had compromised himself with a girl who was involved with a negro in a case about attempted murder. . . . This girl's story has been sold to the Daily Mirror Group and it will include passages in which she was involved with Mr. Profumo and in which the Russian Naval Attaché also figured. . . . Mr. Profumo is alleged to have met this girl 'Kolania' through Lord Astor at Cliveden, where they chased her naked round the bathing pool. . . . It is also alleged that (i) 'Kolania' got into this company through the agency of a Mr. Ward, who was a 'psychopathic specialist' of Wimpole Street; (ii) Mr. Profumo, visiting 'Kolania' in Mr. Ward's house, passed in the passage the Russian Naval Attaché on his way out from 'Kolania'; (iii) 'Kolania' has two letters on War Office paper signed 'J'—although it is not suggested that these letters are anything more than ones of assignation."

(vii) 1st February, 1963—The Security Service come to Admiralty House

127. On receipt of this minute the Prime Minister's Principal Private Secretary asked the Deputy Director-General of the Security Service to come to Admiralty House. His object was simply to tell him about it and to get

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any information which might be helpful for him (the Private Secretary) to report to the Prime Minister. The Private Secretary handed the Deputy Director-General the note and asked if he had any comments. The Deputy Director-General said that very recently the Director-General had had a confidential talk with Mr. Profumo in which Mr. Profumo had recounted a story that was recognisably the same story: but that the girl was called Christine and not Kolania; that Mr. Ward was Stephen Ward; and that he was not a "psychopathic specialist" but an osteopath. The Deputy Director-General told the Private Secretary that these confidences seemed to have been made by Mr. Profumo in the hope that there might be security grounds for taking action with the Press, by D notice or otherwise, to prevent publication, but this hope was a vain one. The Deputy Director-General and the Private Secretary agreed that the first step was to tell Mr. Profumo what had been said and ask if there was any truth in it. The Private Secretary said he would try and do it that evening. Mr. Profumo would then have to decide whether he should tender his resignation to the Prime Minister or not. The Private Secretary said it would be necessary for him to give the information to the Chief Whip and also to tell the Prime Minister on his return from Italy.

(viii) 1st February, 1963—Mr. Profumo is seen

128. Late that evening the Private Secretary called on Mr. Profumo and explained that they had had a story about an article that might possibly appear in the Press and which would show him in a bad light. He told him that normally he would have reported it to the Prime Minister, but he was out of the country, and asked for advice how to proceed. Mr. Profumo said that he had been in continuous touch during that week with the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General and he was also being advised by a private firm of solicitors. His solicitor had spoken to someone who was going to put pressure on the *Sunday Pictorial* not to publish these articles. His solicitor was also seeing the girl in question at her request since she said she was in trouble. Mr. Profumo suggested that the Private Secretary need not bother the Prime Minister with all this at this stage. But the Private Secretary said it seemed of great importance that Mr. Profumo should see the Chief Whip without delay. And Mr. Profumo said he would do so.

129. It should be mentioned here that on Sunday, 3rd February, 1963, the *News of the World* published a picture of Christine Keeler saying that she was to be a witness in the shooting case I have described earlier (paragraph 54). Most people seeing that picture would realise what she was.

(ix) 4th February, 1963—The Chief Whip sees Mr. Profumo

130. Mr. Profumo saw the Chief Whip on Monday, 4th February, at 12 noon. The Prime Minister's Private Secretary was present. Mr. Profumo outlined the story for the benefit of the Chief Whip. The events referred to had all taken place between July and December of 1961. He had been at the bathing pool in July when there had been a pretty cheerful party but everybody had bathing costumes on. Mr. Profumo said he had subsequently, in order to get a giggle in the evening, gone round to Stephen Ward's flat to meet a few young people and have a drink before dinner. Mr. Profumo said that most of the young ladies to be found at this flat were not the sort

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of people one would wish to accompany one to a constituency meeting. But his wife had many theatrical friends and he was used to relaxing in this genre. Mr. Profumo said that there had been a letter which started "My Darling" but it had been quite harmless. He also admitted to a small present—a cigarette lighter. His lawyers had arranged to meet Christine Keeler on Saturday, 2nd February. She had said that the money the newspapers were offering her for her story was not enough and she wanted more. She refused to say that any of the stories that had been put about were untrue. She made it clear that money was what she wanted. Mr. Profumo said he had been told by Sir Norman Brook (who had been advised by M.I. 5) to see as little as possible of Stephen Ward since there was a security problem involved. Mr. Profumo said that his lawyers had advised him to do nothing but to wait and see what, if anything, the newspaper published. If this was libellous he could then issue a writ. The Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General were advising him in the same sense. Mr. Profumo added that he had made a full report on the position to the Head of the Security Service.

(x) Mr. Profumo Asks—Should He Resign?

131. Mr. Profumo asked if he should tell the Prime Minister at this stage. The Chief Whip thought that it was not necessary. Mr. Profumo and the Chief Whip discussed the current rumours and Mr. Profumo asked whether the Chief Whip thought he should resign on account of them. The Chief Whip said that, if they were true, of course he should resign, but if untrue, it would be a great mistake. The thing was to wait for the newspaper articles if they appeared—which, he understood, might be in a fortnight—and then the position would have to be looked at again. Mr. Profumo said that he had never met the Russian Assistant Naval Attaché at Stephen Ward's flat. He had been present at the bathing party in the summer. The only other time he had met him was when, accompanied by his wife, he went to the Gagarin Reception—and had reason to remember Mr. Ivanov as he promised to get them a vodka and went off, never to be seen again.

(xi) Mr. Profumo's Disarming Answer

132. Such was the story told by Mr. Profumo to the Chief Whip and from which he never resiled. When the Chief Whip, to test him took the line, "Well, look, nobody would believe that you didn't sleep with her," Mr. Profumo made the disarming answer, "Yes, I know they wouldn't believe it, but it happens to be true that I didn't sleep with her". He assured the Chief Whip repeatedly that what he said was true and that he was waiting for an opportunity to take action to refute the story. The Chief Whip was kept informed by the Attorney-General of the various discussions which he had had with Mr. Profumo. Just as the Attorney-General felt that they must accept his version as true, so did the Chief Whip. The Attorney-General explained to the Chief Whip from time to time that, if any publication was made, a writ would be issued, but that no opportunity had yet occurred.

(xii) The Westminster Confidential

133. The first opportunity to bring an action came when a private newsletter called the *Westminster Confidential* gave mention to the rumours. This is a typewritten letter, stencilled and distributed to 200 or so subscribers.

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In an issue dated 8th March, 1963, this newsletter referred to the fact that the girls had started selling their stories to the Sunday newspapers and added,

"One of the choicest bits in their stories was a letter, apparently signed 'Jock' on the stationery of the Secretary for W+r. The allegation by this girl was that not only was this Minister, who has a famous actress as his wife, her client, but also the Soviet Military Attaché, apparently a Colonel Ivanov. The famous actress wife, of course, would sue for divorce, the scandal ran. Who was using the call-girl to 'milk' whom of information—the W+r Secretary or the Soviet Military Attaché?—ran the minds of those primarily interested in security."

This newsletter did not come at once to the knowledge of Mr. Profumo or the Chief Whip or the Attorney-General. They got to know of it about 13th March.

134. The question has been asked, Why was not an action for libel taken on this publication? It was clearly defamatory of Mr. Profumo. If he was seeking an opportunity to vindicate himself, why not bring an action? The answer is this: It was considered by Mr. Profumo and his legal adviser and also the Attorney-General. Mr. Profumo's legal adviser was disinclined to take action. He did not think this was the right occasion to sue. The Attorney-General agreed with this view. The *Westminster Confidential* had too small a circulation, and contained scandal about someone else, too, which ought not to be made public. It was very probable that this publication of the *Westminster Confidential* was only the beginning, so that very soon stories might begin to appear in the national Press. It was better, therefore, to wait for a more substantial publication.

135. The opportunity to refute the rumours was not long in coming. It came in a fortnight. But it came in an unexpected form. On 21st March, 1963, Members of Parliament made statements in the House of Commons. Meanwhile many things had happened. Christine Keeler had disappeared. She did not appear to give evidence at the Edgecombe trial. And to add to all the previous rumours, there was a new one, that Mr. Profumo had helped her to disappear.

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CHAPTER IX

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHRISTINE KEELER

(i) The Law

136. One of the matters that has given rise to much public uneasiness is Christine Keeler's disappearance in March, 1963, with the result that she never appeared to give evidence at the trial of John Edgecombe. She was taken to Spain by Paul Mann. It is suggested that this was procured by people in high places, because they were afraid their names might come out in her evidence at the trial. If this be the case, then it would be, of course, a very serious matter.

137. The law is this: If a witness, who is bound over by recognizance to appear to give evidence, does not come forward at the trial, his liability depends whether there is good excuse or not. If he or she has a good excuse, as, for instance, is ill and cannot come, it is no breach of recognizance. But if he or she has no good excuse, then the recognizance is liable to be forfeited. In this case Christine Keeler was bound over in the sum of £40 and she forfeited that sum. But there is this further law: It is a criminal offence for two or more persons to conspire together to obstruct the course of justice by getting a witness to disappear, see *Rex v. Stevenon* (1802) 2 East 362. And in seeing whether persons have been guilty of a conspiracy, it was said by Lord Campbell when Lord Chief Justice of England, "If the necessary effect of the agreement was to defeat the ends of justice, that must be taken to be the object", see *Regina v. Hamp* and others (1852) 6 Cox Criminal Cases at p. 172 [I think *must* should probably be read as *may*.]

138. Such being the law I have looked to see whether there is any evidence of any such conspiracy.

(ii) The Solicitor is afraid she will be "Spirited" out of the Country

139. Before considering Christine Keeler's disappearance in March, I must refer to what happened early in February, 1963, when the John Edgecombe case was expected to come on shortly. Stephen Ward's solicitor told me that he was scared that Christine Keeler would disappear: "The one thing I was afraid of was that Christine Keeler, a material witness in the Edgecombe trial, would be spirited out of the country". I asked him, "Why did you fear that?" His answer was: "Simply because of various things Ward had said to me". The solicitor gave Stephen Ward this firm and wise advice, "On no account must any of us be a party to that thing".

140. About that very time too, early in February, 1963, Paul Mann (on his own admission to me) made this suggestion to Stephen Ward's counsel (I have already quoted it, but it is so important that at this point I repeat it): "I said I did not know what she was going to do, but I said I would be only too willing to take her away after the trial and to keep her Press away from her. I remember saying, too, that I certainly could not do it all on my own funds but I was quite prepared to make a holiday for myself".

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When I asked Paul Mann the question: "They wanted her to disappear after the trial?" he replied, "No, this was purely a suggestion that she should disappear; nobody said, 'Yes, we want her to go after the trial.'"

141. I take it to be clear, therefore, that early in February, 1963, Stephen Ward conceived the idea that Christine Keeler should disappear and mentioned it to Paul Mann; that Paul Mann was willing to assist in it: but nothing was said expressly whether she was to disappear before or after the trial. It is equally clear that the lawyers would have nothing to do with it. It was on 5th February, 1963, that Mr. Profumo and his lawyer consulted the Director of Public Prosecutions. On 7th February, Mr. Profumo's solicitor told Stephen Ward's solicitor of the point. Stephen Ward's solicitor (who had on the day before approved the offer of £500) told me, "My amber light very quickly turned to red and I told my client on no account must he pay any money to her or her solicitor or to her account". Even the £500 was not to be paid to her. He told me: "The thing I was scared of from the very beginning was that Christine Keeler would be spirited away out of the country, and the last thing I wanted was for Stephen Ward to be concerned with that. And if she had disappeared abroad or had had £500 from us, it would have looked extremely fishy."

(iii) Paul Mann Plans to Take a Holiday

142. As it happened the Edgecombe trial was postponed because of the illness of the mini-cab driver. It was adjourned until the next Sessions and was expected to come on for trial in March, 1963. Meanwhile, however, from the first week in February, 1963, Paul Mann was in close touch with Christine Keeler. He told me that he started to spend a tremendous amount of time with her, almost as it were keeping a 24-hour watch on her. The time came, he told me, when she was in a very distressed state and wanted to leave and get away from it all. She told me herself that she was in fear of two coloured men who had been paid to cut her up. She said, "I knew it was my duty to go to the Court but to tell you the truth, I thought, 'To hell with my duty, I am not going to let people knock me about from here to there'. I did not realise the seriousness of the consequences. I just decided to leave." Paul Mann told me that he had himself been planning to have a holiday in Spain a little later but at Christine Keeler's request he brought his holiday forward about two weeks and decided to go earlier. The decision was taken about the end of February, 1963, and they left on the night of Friday, 8th March, 1963.

(iv) They Leave for Spain

143. They went by car. It was a party of three, Paul Mann, Christine Keeler and Kim Proctor. They told me they had very little money. Christine Keeler had £20 which she gave to Paul Mann. Kim Proctor put in money too. I asked Paul Mann what means he had at that time. He said: "I had my own means, untraceable resources. It did really, leaving on Friday night, find us in a sticky position. Between the three of us, I should think we had £100 and some dollars, but I had an insurance cheque for £175. The insurance company had an office in Spain, and I thought there would be no trouble in cashing it at all, but it turned out it took them practically

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four weeks to cash this cheque." At any rate, with such means as they had, they drove across France and into Spain and disappeared. They went to a remote fishing village on the coast of Spain. No one discovered their whereabouts until they went to Madrid at the week-end 23rd-24th March, 1963.

(v) The Newspapers Find Them

144. On Sunday, 24th March, 1963, Paul Mann telephoned the British Embassy. Early on Monday, 25th March, 1963, Christine Keeler appeared at a police station in Madrid and asked to stay the night. Newspaper reporters, she said, were besieging the flat where she was staying. The newspaper reporters did in fact find them. And they were quick to make a contract with her under which she would sell them the story of her disappearance. Paul Mann negotiated it. She was to get £2,000, of which 25 per cent (£500) went to Paul Mann. The newspaper reporters arranged accommodation for her, as she had nothing. They gave £45 to Paul Mann for immediate expenses. The rest was paid to them when they got back to England. On 28th March, 1963, they brought Christine Keeler back to England and took her to Scotland Yard. On 1st April, 1963, she went to the Central Criminal Court and her recognisance in the sum of £40 was forfeited for her non-appearance. Paul Mann did not return till some time later. He only came back on 12th June, 1963.

145. If the intention of Paul Mann and Christine Keeler was to enable Christine Keeler to avoid being called as a witness in the Edgecombe trial, they succeeded completely. The trial of John Edgecombe was started on Thursday, 14th March, 1963, and finished on Friday, 15th March, 1963. Christine Keeler was of course missing. The prosecution could, no doubt, have applied for an adjournment if they had thought fit, and it would probably have been granted: for she was an important witness. But the prosecution did not apply for an adjournment. Nor did the defence. So the case went on.

146. Rumours inevitably spread that an important witness had been got out of the way for political reasons. In view of these rumours I have made every endeavour to find out whether anyone paid money to Paul Mann to take Christine Keeler away. There has been much speculation that Mr. Profumo or Lord Astor paid money to get her to disappear. I have looked closely into the matter.

(vi) Mr. Profumo

147. Mr. Profumo strongly denied that he had paid any money. He very frankly placed at my disposal all records of his bank accounts and of his dealings with shares. I have had these examined by an expert accountant who was nominated by me. He made a most exhaustive examination and made the most minute enquiries. All were answered to his complete satisfaction. I have been through his report myself and am satisfied that there is no trace whatever of any money being paid by Mr. Profumo directly or indirectly to or for the benefit of Stephen Ward or Christine Keeler or Paul Mann or anyone who might conceivably have had a hand in her disappearance. All payments by Mr. Profumo at all material times are fully accounted for. I hold the rumour to be entirely without foundation.

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(vii) Lord Astor

148. Lord Astor, too, strongly denied that he had paid any money. He himself was away in the United States at the time she disappeared. He was away from 27th February, 1963, to 12th April, 1963. He, too, very ~~thoroughly~~ ^{thoroughly} placed all records of his bank accounts and financial dealings fully before me. I have had them examined by the same expert accountant nominated by me. He again made a most exhaustive examination and made more minute enquiries. All his queries have been satisfactorily answered. I have been through his report and there are only these payments by Lord Astor to or for Stephen Ward which I need mention:

- (1) A cheque for £100 which is said to have been handed by Stephen Ward to the landlord of a flat in Comeragh Road. This was early in 1961 and had clearly no relevance to the disappearance of Christine Keeler.
- (2) A cheque for £500 on 6th February, 1963, which is dealt with in paragraph 110. As I have stated none of this was used to pay for the disappearance of Christine Keeler.
- (3) A cheque for £200 on 8th May, 1963. In April, 1963, Stephen Ward had surrendered the tenancy of the cottage. Lord Astor paid this sum to Stephen Ward in respect of improvements made by him at the cottage. Stephen Ward used this to pay his solicitor's fees. None of it was used to pay for the disappearance of Christine Keeler.

There is no trace of any money being paid by Lord Astor to anyone in furtherance of the disappearance of Christine Keeler. All his payments have been fully and satisfactorily accounted for. I hold that in his case also the rumour is entirely without foundation.

(viii) Paul Mann's Security Boxes

149. Paul Mann strongly denied that he received any money. He has some resources but not from Mr. Profumo or Lord Astor. When I asked about his bank account he did tell me: "I have a couple of security boxes that nobody knows of. I keep everything very secretive . . . the two security boxes are not in my name, entirely secret. I just don't like anybody knowing anything about me in that respect . . . but they certainly do not contain any such sums that were offered to me or given to me or supposed to be given to me. Whatever I have is entirely my own. It has not been gained by any weird ways." I have no reason to doubt this statement.

(ix) A Possible Motive

150. I must add that there is no evidence whatever that Paul Mann or Christine Keeler received any money for her disappearance. It is quite clear that, on this trip to Spain, Paul Mann was very short of money. So was Christine Keeler. It must be remembered that she had lost her ~~only~~ ^{only} contract with the newspapers. The *Sunday Pictorial* told her on 24th February 1963, that they were not going to publish her story. She had no further contact in the offing. The only pecuniary motive that has been suggested to me was this: It may be that they both foresaw that, if she disappeared, there would be a good story to sell to the newspapers and they hoped to find their reward that way. If so, they succeeded in their object.

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(x) Was there a Conspiracy?

151. I return therefore to my initial question: Is there any evidence of a conspiracy to obstruct the course of justice by causing Christine Keeler to disappear? There is no evidence whatever to implicate Mr. Profumo or Lord Astor. There is, however, some evidence against Paul Mann and Christine Keeler: for the very fact of their concerted action in causing her to disappear is evidence sufficient for the purpose (see the dictum of Lord Campbell which I have already quoted). But it would be a question for a jury whether they did intend to obstruct the course of justice.

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CHAPTER X

THE EDGECOMBE TRIAL

(i) The Trial is Held Without Christine Keeler

152. On 14th March, 1963, John Edgecombe came up for trial at the Central Criminal Court before Mr. Justice Thesiger and a jury. The indictments contained five counts: Count 1 dealt with the 'slashing'. It charged Edgecombe that on 27th October, 1962, he wounded Gordon with intent to do him grievous bodily harm. Counts 2 to 5 dealt with the 'shooting'. They charged Edgecombe with these offences on 14th December, 1962: shooting at Christine Keeler with intent to commit murder; shooting at her with intent to do grievous bodily harm; possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life; and having an offensive weapon without lawful authority.

153. Both counsel for the prosecution and for the defence knew that Christine Keeler, a very important witness, had disappeared, but neither applied for an adjournment, and the trial proceeded without her evidence. Counsel for the prosecution simply said to the jury: "I am unable to call the principal witness, Miss Keeler, before you. As far as the police are concerned, she has disappeared. It is nothing to do with the defendant." The trial did not finish on 14th March, 1963, but continued on to the 15th March, 1963. In the result John Edgecombe was *acquitted* on the counts of shooting with intent to murder (Count 2) and shooting with intent to do grievous bodily harm (Count 3). He was also *acquitted* on the count of wounding Gordon on 27th October, 1962 (Count 1). But he was *convicted* of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life (Count 4). (The Judge discharged the jury from giving a verdict on Count 5.)

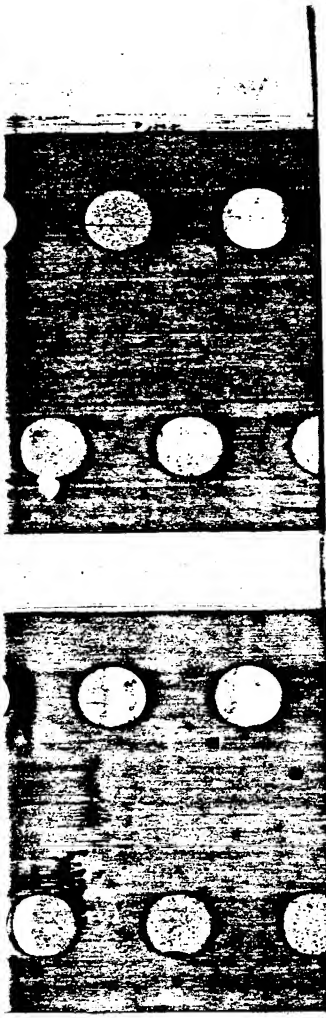
154. After the verdict, evidence was given of John Edgecombe's character. In 1951 he was convicted on two cases of stealing, in 1959 for living on immoral earnings, and in 1962 for unlawful possession of dangerous drugs. The Judge sentenced him to imprisonment for seven years. He appealed against his conviction and sentence but on 27th May, 1963, the Court of Criminal Appeal dismissed the appeal.

155. It seems plain that the absence of Christine Keeler had an important influence on the course of the case. As the Lord Chief Justice said, "The fact that the Jury acquitted on the first two (shooting) charges seems to this Court natural in the absence of the girl". I may perhaps add that the acquittal on the 'slashing' charge seems natural, also, in the absence of the girl over whom the men were quarrelling.

(ii) The Attorney-General Makes Inquiries

156. The Attorney-General, of course, had nothing to do with the prosecution of John Edgecombe. The first he heard of the disappearance of Christine Keeler was from the evening papers. Next day rumours were circulating round the Temple that an important witness had been got out of the way for political reasons and that some bargain had been made that

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the case should go on without her. I am satisfied that the lawyers for the prosecution were party to no such bargain. Counsel for the prosecution went to the Attorney-General and explained how it was that the case had proceeded without this witness. It was his decision alone and for these reasons: (a) He thought there was sufficient evidence without the missing witness; (b) John Edgecombe was in custody; and (c) the trial had already been postponed once because of the illness of a witness. I would not wish to question these reasons—they are cogent—but I think that, in the result, it was an unfortunate decision. It made it difficult for the prosecution to ask for a conviction of John Edgecombe on the charge of slashing 'Lucky' Gordon on 27th October, 1962, and on the charges of shooting at Christine Keeler on 14th December, 1962, with intent to murder her or cause her grievous bodily harm (John Edgecombe was not convicted on any of these charges): and it made it possible for John Edgecombe to complain (as he complained to me) that he had no opportunity to cross-examine her as to her character and as to the fact that the gun was, as he said, her gun. (It is always a telling point for a defendant to say he had no opportunity to cross-examine the chief witness for the prosecution.) More important even than this, it heightened the suspicion that her disappearance was manoeuvred for political reasons. It was thought to be in Mr. Profumo's interest that she should disappear and he was supposed to be at the back of it.

157. The Attorney-General made immediate inquiries into the matter. He saw Mr. Profumo and asked him whether he had anything to do with the disappearance of the witness and Mr. Profumo assured the Attorney-General that neither he nor anyone on his behalf had had anything to do with the absence of Christine Keeler as a witness at the trial.

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CHAPTER XI

PRESS COMMENT

(i) The Sunday Pictorial Abandon One Story and Accept Another

158. It is time to revert to what the Press had been doing. It will be remembered that, in early February, 1963, when the Edgcombe case was expected any day, the *Sunday Pictorial* were thinking of publishing the story which Christine Keeler had given them. But Stephen Ward and his lawyers were doing all they could to stop publication. When the Edgcombe case was adjourned, there was not the same urgency: because nothing could be published till after the Edgcombe case. Nevertheless, Stephen Ward was not idle. He saw the newspaper, and also wrote to them, saying that Christine's story was untrue.

159. During the three days, 19th to 21st February, 1963, there were important discussions between the newspapermen, on the one hand, and Stephen Ward and his solicitor on the other hand. The upshot of this was a proposal that the newspaper should abandon Christine Keeler's story and publish Stephen Ward's story instead. This proposal eventually was found acceptable to all concerned. But there was no actual bargain about it. The newspaper realised that they could not safely publish Christine Keeler's story but could safely publish Stephen Ward's. And that is what they decided to do. On Thursday, 28th February, the newspaper wrote to Christine Keeler saying that they had decided not to publish her story. This meant that she had to rest content with the £200 she had received—she lost all chance of the balance of £800. About this time they made arrangements for Stephen Ward's story. They got it all ready for publication immediately after the Edgcombe trial which was expected in March.

(ii) The Daily Express has a Striking First Page

160. The Edgcombe trial was held, as I have said, on 14th and 15th March, 1963. On the very first day, Thursday, 14th March, the announcement was made that Christine Keeler was missing. This attracted much attention. On the very next day, Friday, the 15th, whilst the case was still part heard, the *Daily Express* came out with a front page which had a banner headline "WAR MINSTER SHOCK". On the left-hand side there was a photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Profumo, with the comment:

"Mr. John Profumo, the War Minister, has offered his resignation to Mr. Macmillan for personal reasons. The Prime Minister is understood to have asked him to stay on. There has been speculation about Mr. Profumo's future among M.P.s. for several weeks. On the steps of his house in Chester Terrace, Regent's Park, he said: 'I have not seen the Prime Minister and I have not resigned—there is no reason why I should'. This is taken to mean that he has accepted the Prime Minister's request to stay."

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161. On the right-hand side of the page there was a photograph of Christine Keeler headed "VANISHED OLD BAILEY WITNESS", and below:

"This is Christine Keeler, the 21-year-old model who was found to be missing yesterday when the Old Bailey trial of a man accused of attempting to murder her began. The jury was told: 'As far as the police are concerned, she has simply disappeared'."

On an inner page there were four striking photographs of Christine Keeler from which most people could readily infer her calling.

162. In point of fact, Mr. Profumo had never seen the Prime Minister nor offered his resignation. All that had happened was that, six weeks earlier, he had seen the Chief Whip and asked if he ought to resign and had been told that if there was no truth in the rumours, he should not resign. The *Daily Express* was not the only newspaper to get the story of an offer of resignation. The *Liverpool Daily Post* had it also.

163. The *Daily Express* told me that the juxtaposition of the two stories—Christine Keeler's disappearance and Mr. Profumo's resignation—was entirely coincidental and supplemented it with reasons. Accepting this to be so, it had nevertheless unfortunate results. It is true, of course, that those of the readers who had not heard the rumours would not take it that there was any connection between the two stories. But it would seem that some of their readers, namely those who had heard the rumour of Mr. Profumo's association with Christine Keeler, now added to it this further rumour, that he was responsible for her disappearance. To them it would carry a defamatory meaning.

(iii) The Attorney-General is Consulted

164. The front page of the *Daily Express* aroused a good deal of alarm. The Chief Whip felt the thing was getting out of hand. He asked whether it was actionable. On the self-same day, 15th March, 1963, the Prime Minister himself discussed the position with the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General thought it would be premature to issue any writs or anything of that sort. He took the view that there was nothing in the newspaper that could be described as defamatory: and that the right course was to wait for the Sunday newspapers and see what, if anything, they published.

(iv) The Sunday Pictorial Publish Stephen Ward's Story

165. The *Sunday Pictorial* waited till after the Edgcombe case to publish Stephen Ward's story. They had got it all ready beforehand. It was approved by Stephen Ward and his solicitors. The fee was to be £375. It was to be paid direct to Stephen Ward's solicitors. The reason was because Stephen Ward owed his solicitors £475 for the costs of all they did to stop Christine Keeler's story: and his solicitors wanted to be sure of their money.

166. So, as soon as the Edgcombe case was over, on Sunday, 17th March, 1963, the *Sunday Pictorial* published Stephen Ward's story. They combined it with a cogent comment on the disappearance of Christine Keeler.

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On the front page, there was a large photograph of her. Then below in large letters, "THE MODEL, M.I.5, THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT AND ME, by Stephen Ward", followed by this description:

"This is Christine Keeler, the 21-year-old red-head model whose name made news this week as the missing witness in an Old Bailey shooting trial. Christine knew a number of distinguished men in public life. Did she fear they might be named in the case? What is she like, this girl who came to London and became the friend of the famous and the wealthy? Who knows her better than Stephen Ward?"

On the inside pages there was the article by Stephen Ward on "My friendship with Christine". But there was not a word about Mr. Profumo in it, so it gave him no cause of action. A day or two later the newspaper paid Stephen Ward's solicitor £525 for the story, and that was the end of that transaction, subject, however, to the 'Darling' letter.

(v) The 'Darling' Letter is Handed Back

167. One important thing, however, remained to be done. The *Sunday Pictorial* had all this time held the original of the 'Darling' letter, that is, the letter of 9th August, 1961, by Mr. Profumo to Christine Keeler. They had kept it in their safe. It was the most talked of unseen letter in London, but no one asked to see it. And they had photographs of it too. They had it in mind, of course. On 15th March, 1963, when Stephen Ward's story had been accepted and the solicitor went to approve it, the newspaper editor mentioned the letter. He told Stephen Ward's solicitor: "I have got in my possession the indiscreet letter. Once things are over and done with, I will let you have it." This did not form part of the negotiations. There was no bargain about it.

168. The *Sunday Pictorial* continued to keep the letter. Even after the Edgcombe case, no one asked to see it. Even after Mr. Profumo's statement in the House on 22nd March, 1963, no one asked to see it. But eventually the *Sunday Pictorial* did not want to keep it any more. They wanted to get rid of it. They suggested to Stephen Ward's solicitor that he should have it. So on Wednesday, 3rd April, 1963, Stephen Ward's solicitor went and got it from them. But both the newspaper and Stephen Ward's solicitor soon had second thoughts about the propriety of this. They seem to have come to the conclusion that the proper person to have the letter was Mr. Profumo's solicitor, because the copyright in it belonged to Mr. Profumo. So on 5th April, Stephen Ward's solicitor handed it over to Mr. Profumo's solicitor. But the newspaper kept their photographs of the letter. After all they had paid Christine Keeler £200. Maybe the photographs of the letter would come in useful one day.

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CHAPTER XII

THE MEETING OF THE FIVE MINISTERS

(i) The Matter is Raised in the House

169. The disappearance of Christine Keeler—and the front page of the *Daily Express*—had the inevitable result. Rumours multiplied that Mr. Profumo was responsible for her disappearance. Within a week, on Thursday, 21st March, 1963, these rumours found voice in the House of Commons. Shortly after 11 p.m. Mr. George Wigg rose and said, "There is not an Hon. Member in the House, nor a journalist in the Press Gallery, nor do I believe is there a person in the public gallery who, in the last few days, has not heard rumour upon rumour involving a Member of the Government Front Bench. . . . I myself use the Privilege of the House of Commons—that is what it is given me for—to ask the Home Secretary to go to the Despatch Box . . . he knows that the rumour to which I refer relates to Miss Christine Keeler and Miss Davies and a shooting by a West Indian—and on behalf of the Government, categorically deny the truth of these rumours . . . on the other hand, if there is anything in them set up a Select Committee." Mr. Crossman supported him. About 11.50 p.m. Mrs. Castle asked this question, "What if it is a perversion of justice that is at stake? The Clerk of the Central Criminal Court is reported as saying, 'If any member of the public did know where Miss Keeler was, it is his or her duty to inform the police'. If accusations are made that there are people in high places who do know and are not informing the police, is it not a matter of public interest?"

170. These were remarks of much significance. They clearly imputed that Mr. Profumo had been responsible for the disappearance of Christine Keeler.

171. There were four Ministers who were in the Chamber and heard these remarks, namely, Mr. Henry Brooke, the Home Secretary, Mr. William Deedes, the Minister without Portfolio, Sir John Hobson, the Attorney-General, and Sir Peter Rawlinson, the Solicitor-General. Mr. Iain Macleod was in the Chamber for the last part. He heard the whole of Mrs. Castle's remarks. After the remarks were made, Mr. William Deedes at once went out and reported them to the Chief Whip (Mr. Martin Redmayne, who had not been in the Chamber, and had not heard them). It was clear that Mr. Henry Brooke would be expected to reply to them. He could not leave the Chamber but the Chief Whip, with the assistance of the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, drafted out a form of words to suggest to him. Mr. Brooke adopted them in his reply in these words:

"I do not propose to comment on rumours which have been raised under the cloak of Privilege and safe from any action at law. The Hon. Member for Dudley (Mr. Wigg) and the Hon. Member for Blackburn (Mrs. Castle) should seek other means of making these insinuations if they are prepared to substantiate them."